Asian markets follow Nasdaq, Wall Street slide

STORY IN BUSINESS, PAGE B1

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PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 14, 2001 ★ 74 PAGES 5 SECTIONS VOL.16 NO. 96 ₱15

Palace using 'pork' for list-up–Sonny O

BY JULIET L. JAVELLANA
AND GERALD G. LACUARTA

MALACAÑANG is set to release P17.5 million in pork barrel to each member of the House of Representatives to ensure the passage of a law for the holding of a special registration for 4.5 million young voters, the Senate finance commit-

PALACE/ A20

WHAT'S INSIDE

- **26 Pinoys jailed in UAE** NEWS / A4
- **DENR reviews Erap orders** NEWS / A7
- **Sulu sultan heirs want $.8B** NEWS / A7
- **False alarm: Erap held at airport** NEWS / A2

GMA: Talks with Reds on April 27

BY ARMAND N. NOCUM

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday announced the resumption of peace talks with communist rebels on April 27, but said she would wait for a Cabinet study to decide whether to hold the talks abroad.

Ms Macapagal invited leaders of the National Democratic Front, living in exile in the Netherlands, "to join us here for the cause of peace, political stability and social-economic progress."

The President said she was "glad that both parties have agreed to con-

GMA/ A20

ERIK ARAZAS

PEOPLE-POWERED
President Macapagal waves from the deck of the newly commissioned search and rescue ship BRP Edsa II.

Erap psychs up self for prison life

DEPOSED leader Joseph Estrada yesterday said he was ready to be jailed if charged with plunder even as he kept his fingers crossed the Supreme Court would restore his presidential immunity from criminal prosecution.

He told a local radio station that he was "willing to be arrested" should he be tried in the Sandiganbayan for plunder, a nonbailable offense.

Estrada, who was toppled in the military-backed Edsa People Power II, has until March 22 to convince the Supreme Court that he should be spared from prosecution and arrest.

Thirteen Supreme Court justices on March 2 upheld the legitimacy of the Macapagal presidency, saying Estrada effectively resigned on Jan. 20 amid massive protests. Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo took over the presidency earlier in the day.

A majority of nine justices also ruled that Estrada had thus lost his presidential immunity from prosecution.

Estrada, however, said his lawyers had told him the court decision could be reversed because some justices expressed their reservations on record.

The former movie actor said the

ERAP/ A20

Irene probed in Germany

Gloria orders PCGG to check $13-B account

BY DONNA S. CUETO AND BLANCHE S. RIVERA

GERMAN authorities are investigating Irene Marcos Araneta for "money laundering" in connection with her alleged attempt to transfer billions of dollars in Switzerland to Deutsche Bank in Dusseldorf, Germany.

The number of the investigation file on Irene's case is 513Jf31/01, Johannes Mocken, spokesperson of the Public Prosecutor's Office in Dusseldorf, told the INQUIRER yesterday in a phone interview.

According to Mocken, the public prosecutor handling the investigation is Kersten Noll, who is in charge of the "special department for organized criminality."

"What I can tell you right now is that's right—we're leading the investigation. I can't tell you more at the moment," Mocken said.

He refused to say when the investigation started. "We are still investigating. We are not yet finished," he said.

But Mocken cited an article from the newspaper Frankfurter Rundschau based in Frankfurt, Germany, which quoted the ongoing special report of the INQUIRER on the supposed attempt of Irene and her husband, Gregorio "Greggy" Araneta III, to move $13.2 billion from the Union Bank of Switzerland (UBS) to Deutsche Bank.

Earlier yesterday, the INQUIRER phoned Deutsche Bank in Frankfurt to inquire about the investigation, and was connected to its spokesperson, Detles Rahmsdors.

"You have to ask the state authorities. We are not the ones doing the investigation. We cannot say

IRENE / A6

Greggy got power of attorney

BY DONNA S. CUETO

(Third of a series)

SPECIAL REPORT

IRENE Araneta executed another incriminating document on Feb. 14, 2001, shortly after she opened her new account, 7690779, at Deutsche Bank in Dusseldorf, Germany.

Supposedly acting on the instructions of her husband, Gregorio "Greggy" Araneta III, Irene signed a "power of attorney" covering all her accounts, specifying him as the "sole" person who would represent her in dealings with Deutsche Bank.

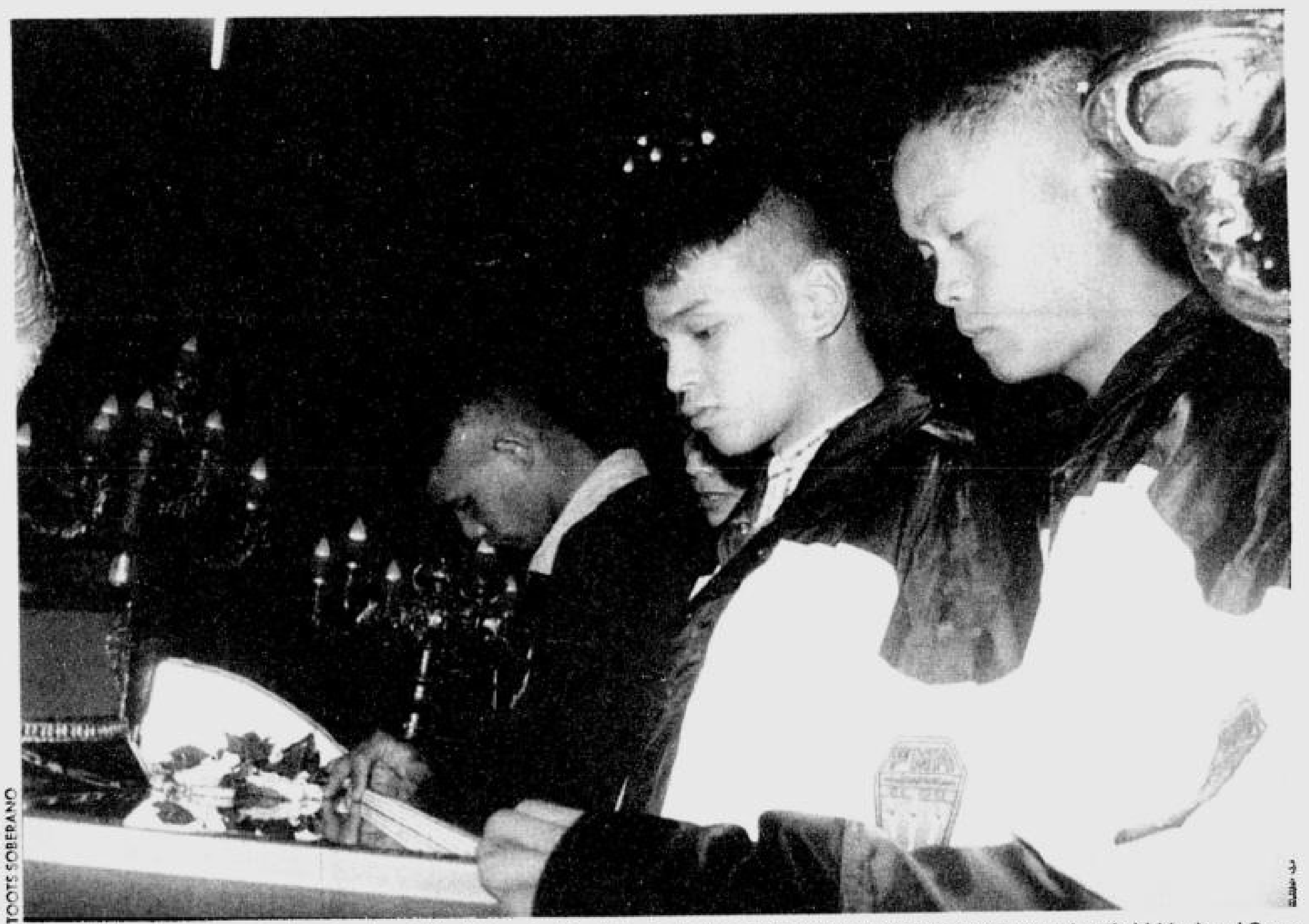
"This power of attorney applies to all my existing and future accounts and safe custody accounts kept under the customer master number stated above," Irene said, referring to Account 7690779.

The younger daughter of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos and her husband were supposedly planning to use that account to launder her accounts at the Union Bank of Switzerland (UBS).

Greggy signed at the left-hand top box in the space provided for the "specimen signatures of authorized persons."

The "personal details" typed under the box were: Gregorio Maria Araneta (name); McKinley Road 52, 12000 Makati City, Philippines (ad-

GREGGY/ A6



TOOTS SOBERANO

PMA TRAGEDY. Suspects in fatal hazing—Third Class Cadets John Louie Ong, Willard Aperocho, Michael Rerang (partly hidden) and Omar Julius Labajo—view the body of Fourth Class Cadet Edward Domingo at the Ignatius Church in Fort del Pilar, Baguio City. *(Story on Page A17.)*

Cagayan lad tops PMA grads

Erap namesake Joseph Jason Estrada is No. 166

BY GOBLETH MOULIC
AND VINCENT CABREZA
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

FORT DEL PILAR, Baguio City—A "bookish" young man from Cagayan will lead the 195 graduates of the Philippine Military Academy's Kaakibat Class of 2001.

Sadiri Rabaja Tabutol will receive the Presidential Saber from President Macapagal on March 25 for topping the PMA's merit roll.

Tabutol, who will join the Philippine Air Force, comes from Barangay Sta. Cruz in the coastal town of Ballesteros in Cagayan.

Ryan Villaros Villar of Jose Panganiban town in Camarines Norte is No. 2. Third is Tabutol's fellow Cagayano, Harold Dave Canlas Pre of Piat town.

Two female cadets also made it to the PMA's Top 10. They are Florangel Alvarado Murito, fifth, and Concepcion Guadines Reaño of Parañaque City, ninth.

Two cadets from Mindanao—Murito of Kabalasan, Zamboanga del Sur, and Oswald Ian Bongato Dira, of Bayugan, Agusan del Sur, share 10th place.

The other cadets in the Top 10 this year are: Rene Sevilla of Bamban, Tarlac, fourth; Ariel Nicomedes Torres of San Pedro, Laguna, sixth; Kristoffer Ilarde of Pioduran, Albay, seventh; and Francis Rugayan of Diliman, Quezon City, eighth.

Another female cadet who landed among the top 30 graduates is Esperanza Fajardo of Mandaluyong City, who ranked 29th.

Army 2nd Lt. Arlene dela Cruz made history in 1999 when she became the first

CAGAYAN/ A20

Chicken 'tinola' for Pinoy soul

BY ROWENA C. BURGOS

REMEMBER "Chicken Soup for the Soul," a book which has been on the list of bestsellers for many years now?

Well, its authors, Jack Canfield and Mark Victor Hansen, are planning a new book, "Chicken Soup for the Filipino Soul."

"We both believe that Filipinos have a great soul, a great ethic, a great culture and a gracious spirit and hospitality, " Hansen said. "You're one of the best-kept secrets of the planet. You read more books than those in any capital of Asia."

Filipinos who want to share stories that can tug at one's heartstrings, tickle the funny bone and point up a moral all at the same

CHICKEN/ A19

ANG SAYA! KAMI DITO AY MAGPA-PARTY DIN DAHIL D'YAN!

Palaweños find a way to lick slick

BY DOMINIQUE
MONERA TABORA
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—Lick the slick, and party on.

Concerned officials and residents here have found a novel way of collecting and recycling used oil, a major

PALAWEÑOS/ A20

'You have policemen with you, I know the major who's with you'

BY MARTIN P. MARFIL

"*HINDI na tayo mag-uusap. Niloloko niyo kami ... may kasama kayong mga pulis ... kilala ko ang major na kasama niyo* (We will not talk anymore. You are fooling us, you have policemen with you, I know the major who is with you)."

That was the last time the mother of 22-year-old kidnap victim Giancarlo P. Leung heard from her son's kidnappers. It was late Saturday night and Lota Leung was on her way with a relative to deliver the ransom the kidnappers had demanded.

Hours later, between 3 and 4 a.m. Sunday, Gian's body was found in Mexico, Pampanga.

Gian, a graduating journalism student of the Univer-

YOU/ A19

GIANCARLO Leung and Tihani Tingal of UP Baguio

Second FRONT PAGE

NAKURYENTE LANG PALA!

Erap held at airport? False alarm

By TJ Burgonio
and Dona Pazzibugan

IT would have been a quiet, uneventful trip were it not for the hullabaloo caused by a false alarm raised by a local politician.

Ousted President Joseph Estrada's trip to Occidental Mindoro yesterday caused a stir after a supporter claimed that Estrada, his wife Dr. Luisa Ejercito and son, San Juan Mayor Jinggoy Estrada, had been barred from leaving the domestic airport in Manila.

Alarmed that Estrada and his party had not arrived at the expected time in San Jose, Mindoro, Rep. Ricardo Quintos announced on radio that the Estradas were being held and thoroughly investigated regarding the purpose of their flight by authorities at the domestic airport.

Officials of the Manila International Airport Authority and the Air Transportation Office quickly dismissed Quintos' claim, saying it was baseless and nothing more than a publicity stunt.

The truth was, according to the ATO, Ms Ejercito and son Jinggoy were able to depart for San Jose 8:51 a.m. as scheduled aboard a twin-engine helicopter, RP-C1578 and arrived there around 10:30 a.m.

Estrada's scheduled departure of 9:30 a.m. aboard another helicopter, RP-C4419, was delayed for more than two hours because of the staging of an air show by Air Force aircraft in honor of outgoing Armed Forces of the Philippines chief Gen. Angelo Reyes between 9:50 and 11:45 a.m.

Estrada's helicopter eventually took off 11:53 a.m. With Estrada was Ernesto Maceda, former ambassador to Washington, D.C., the ATO said.

Estrada flew to San Jose to campaign for his wife and the other senatorial candidates of the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino-Puwersa ng Masa, who arrived there earlier aboard a flight of Air Philippines.

Upon his arrival Estrada himself denied he was deliberately detained.

"That's not true. No one held us up at the airport. It just so happened that there were Philippine Air Force exercises at the airport for 45 minutes," he said.

Maceda, however said he believed that airport officials were just making up excuses to detain Estrada.

"In the context of what has been happening . . . I think it's all part of the black propaganda against Estrada," said Maceda.

Some campaign officials said the fiasco could have been prevented had Estrada left Manila for San Jose earlier, as he was expected to.

Estrada, according to some officials, was expected to leave Manila around 9 a.m. However he was able to get to the airport only at around 11 a.m.

By that time, airport authorities informed Estrada's party that they have to close the airport for 45 minutes for the exercises.

His son Jinggoy also denied that they were held up at the airport.

Maceda said the former first lady and his son were delayed from leaving for half an hour because they failed to completely fill out the passengers' manifesto.

Estrada had been placed under close surveillance after authorities said he had tried to escape thrice to nearby regions while in Mindanao more than a week ago. The Supreme Court had earlier upheld Macapagal-Arroyo's presidency and stripped the former movie actor of immunity from suits.

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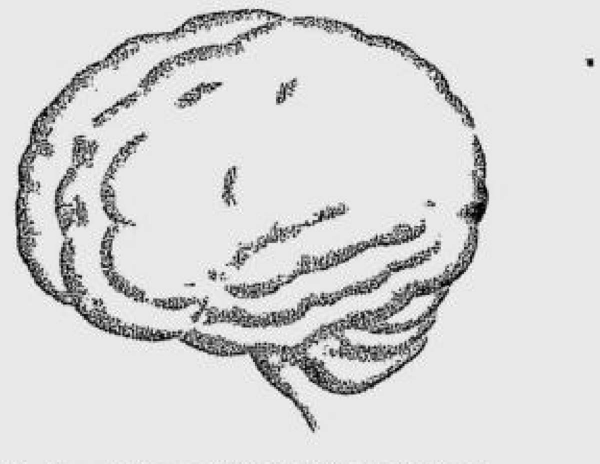

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PPC unfazed by Erap 'magic' in Tondo

SENATORIAL candidates of the administration's People Power Coalition shrugged off yesterday the apparently still strong support that the poor continues to give deposed President Joseph Estrada as shown by the huge welcome he got at the Smokey Mountain urban poor community in Tondo the other day.

Las Piñas City Rep. Manuel Villar, who grew up in the slums of Tondo, said that even former first lady Imelda Marcos is mobbed whenever she goes to such areas.

Villar said it is the administration coalition's obligation to "explain to the poor the true issue" in this election campaign, which is that the country needs good governance, among other things.

Estrada's visit to Smokey Mountain drew an impassioned comment from Makati Rep. Joker Arroyo during a forum at the Philippine Normal University in Manila.

"(Estrada) has the gall to go to Smokey Mountain," considering that he (allegedly) stole from the poor, said Arroyo.

He was referring to the charges that Estrada had collected bribes from operators of "jueteng," an illegal numbers game that is played mostly by the poor.

"So, are we supposed to just forget about that?" said Arroyo.

Economics professor Winnie Monsod lamented the display of support by Tondo slum dwellers for Estrada.

"Thank God for the Filipino's sense of loyalty," Monsod said. "But in this case, please change it, it is misplaced."

She said she wouldn't have minded if Estrada had stolen from the rich and given to the poor.

"But he hasn't. It's still with him. Where is it?" Monsod said.

Lawyer Francis Pangilinan acknowledged that Estrada still has loyal supporters but he believes that their number has dwindled after People Power II.

Pangilinan also expressed the belief that many people have now realized that what they want is good governance, something which President Macapagal-Arroyo's administration can provide, he said. *Christine Avendaño*

Misuari named envoy to OIC

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday said she designated a former Muslim rebel leader as the Philippines' special envoy to the Organization of Islamic Countries.

Nur Misuari, former chair of the rebel Moro National Liberation Front and now governor of a predominantly Muslim autonomous region in southern Mindanao region has accepted the post, Macapagal said.

Misuari led the MNLF when it waged an Islamic separatist insurrection in Mindanao in the early 1970s up to 1996, when the rebel group dropped its demand for a separate Islamic nation in the region and signed a peace accord with the Philippine government.

The influential, 56-nation OIC brokered the talks that led to the signing of that accord.

Guerrillas who opposed the MNLF's peace agreement with the government broke off from the group and organized the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, which is continuing a separatist insurrection in Mindanao, homeland of the country's Muslim minority.

Macapagal is working to open talks with the MILF. *AP*

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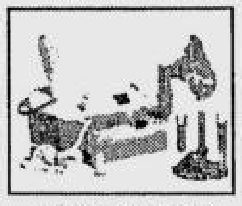

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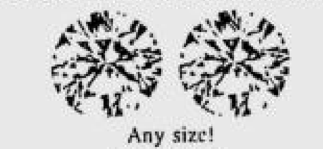

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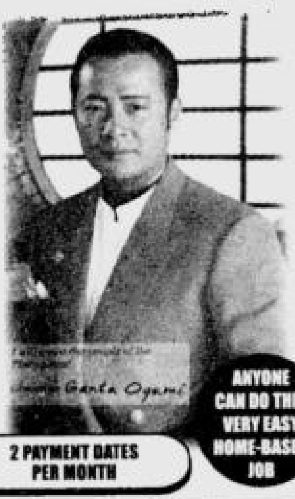

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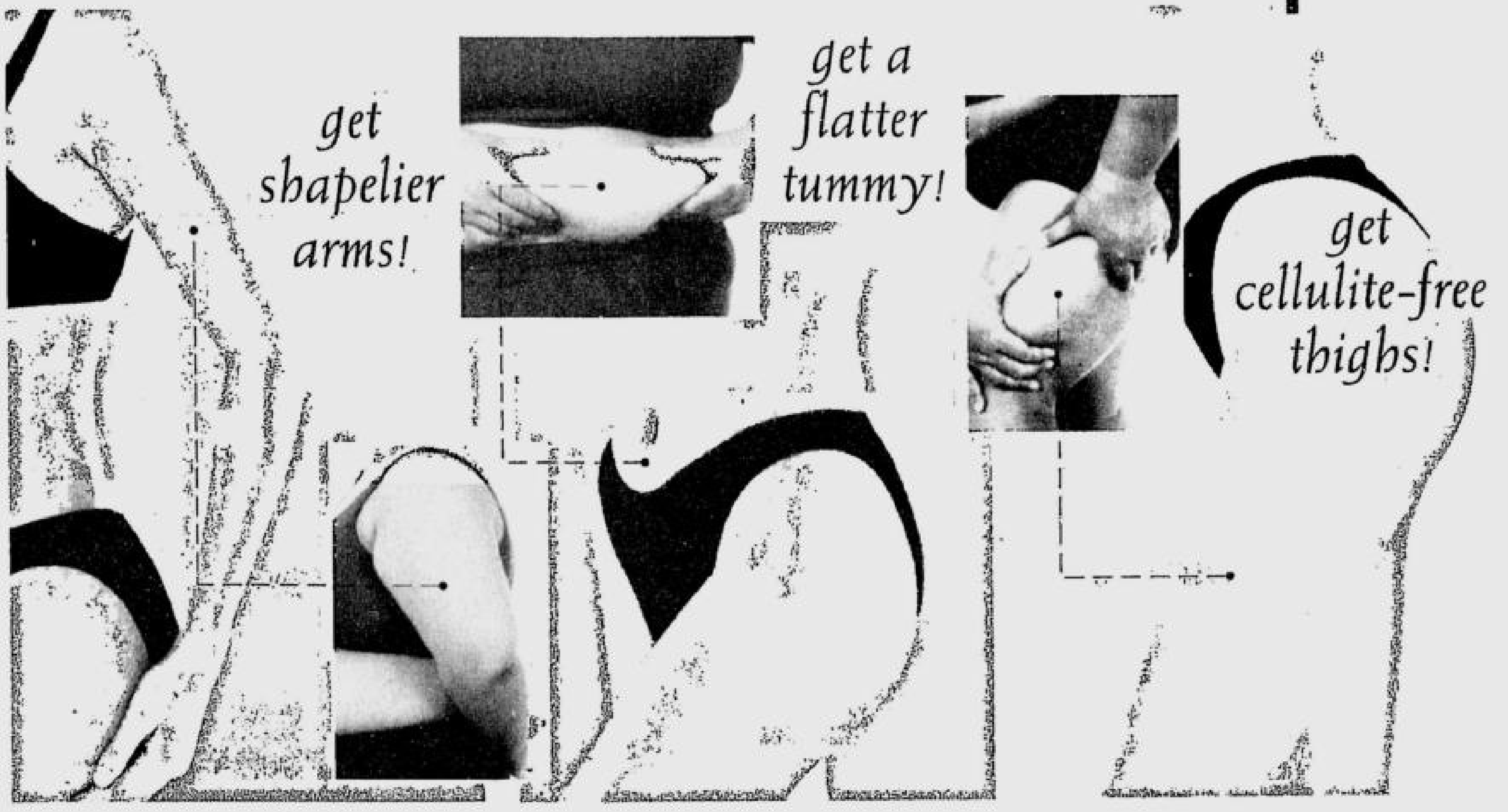

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26 Pinoy seamen duped in loan scam jailed in UAE

By Gerald G. Lacuarta

AT LEAST 26 Filipino seafarers have been languishing in jail in the United Arab Emirates since Jan. 16 after they were duped by an Indian accountant who fled after taking out huge bank loans in their name.

Roy Señeres, chair of the National Labor Relations Commission, said the families of the 26 jailed overseas Filipino workers have been seeking an audience with Vice President and concurrent Foreign Secretary Teofisto Guingona, but were told that Guingona was in the provinces campaigning for the 13 senatorial candidates of the administration.

Señeres, the former ambassador to the UAE, also scored Benjamin Domingo, foreign undersecretary for migrant workers, for failing to look after the welfare of the jailed seafarers.

Victims twice over

"It seems that the Philippine government is not interested," said Señeres.

Señeres said the DFA should summon the UAE ambassador to Manila and Philippine Ambassador to the UAE Amable Aguiluz III to work out the release of the 26 jailed OFWs.

"These 26 OFWs were victims but why are they in jail?" Señeres said. "They are being victimized twice over."

Señeres said the wives and parents of the seafarers came to him on March 6 seeking his help in bringing the plight of the 26 to the attention of the DFA and the Philippine consulate in Abu Dhabi.

"These seafarers or seamen were arrested and detained in jail for an alleged offense which I believe is not criminal in nature," Señeres said.

The 26 were named as Nestor Agustin, Nilo Martinez, Frederick Caramoan, Leonardo Zapata, Nicasio Dagsa, Ildefonso Amul, Danilo Padilla, Ernesto Castillo, Marianito Gimena, Mario Algodon, Samuel Ramirez, Antonio Hafala, Nelson Caramoan, Ronnie Valdez and Joel Sumalde—all arrested jailed on Jan. 16. Arrested and detained 20 days later were Dionesio Sulayao, Juan Aguilar, Renato Tajero Rufino Sawali, Fred Vertudez, Paulito Gimena, Jose Diaz, Johnny Villasoto, Marcelino Silan, Albert Dagsa, Edward Reyes, Jaime Feliciano and Alvin John Tayao.

Loan fraud

In a letter to Señeres, the wives and parents of the 26, led by Fatima Agustin, said the seafarers were encouraged to apply for a loan by a certain Indian named Stanley Pereira, chief accountant of their company in Abu Dhabi. It turned out, however, that Pereira made it appear in the application forms that they were holding higher positions with higher salaries to justify higher loans.

It was learned that the 26 applied for loans of $5,000 each but Pereira allegedly changed the amount to $60,000 and appropriated the difference to himself.

"Clearly, our relatives do not deserve to be in jail," the relatives said. "They are victims of Mr. Pereira for which they should not be made to suffer."

Agustin said her husband and the 25 co-workers signed blank loan forms as they trusted Pereira since he had done "good things for them in the past." It was only when the 26 were arrested on Jan. 16 and Feb. 5 that they learned that Pereira had manipulated the transactions.

The 26 OFWs were charged with estafa and were being asked to pay the loans.

But Señeres said the 26 OFWs should be bailed out so they can return to work and pay their legitimate loans, saying the OFWs have no intention of fleeing because their passports were being held by authorities in Abu Dhabi.

"To date, the families of these seafarers are starving as their salaries and allotments have been unduly withheld by the company from the time of their detention up to the present," Seneres said.

"Are they being detained like properties and being attached like chattels by the bank just to go after the culprit?" he asked. "This is a clear violation of the human rights of our countrymen."

Señeres urged Guingona to invite the UAE Ambassador to the Philippines to enlighten the Philippine government about the plight of the jailed seamen.

Former PSG chief still head of Erap guards

By Carlito Pablo

FORMER Presidential Security Group commander Brig. Gen. Rodulfo Diaz still takes charge of security measures for disgraced President Joseph Estrada, a ranking military officer yesterday said.

Moreover, Estrada's security detail is several times larger than those assigned to former Presidents Corazon Aquino and Fidel Ramos, it was also learned.

Diaz, a Marine officer who unashamedly shed tears when Estrada and his family fled Malacañang on Jan. 20, had been reporting "almost every day" at Estrada's residence on Polk Street in Greenhills, San Juan, the source said.

"He's calling the shots although on an unofficial basis," said the source who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Camp Aguinaldo documents disclosed that Armed Forces Chief of Staff General Angelo Reyes had provided Estrada a 51-person security detail, mostly composed of Marines.

The security force was earlier plucked out of the PSG and then placed under Camp Aguinaldo's Headquarters Support Company by virtue of AFP Special Orders Number 28 dated Jan. 28, 2001.

The force was later placed directly under Reyes' office through AFP Special Orders Number 38 issued on Feb. 7, 2001.

The detail is composed of three officers and 48 enlisted men, Ms Aquino has three guards including one Air Force officer while Ramos, also a former general, has 13, two of them officers.

The highest-ranked officer in Estrada's security detail is Marine Capt. Juan Ismael Villadolid who is usually seen with Estrada in campaign sorties for opposition senatorial candidates.

Following the ouster of Estrada, Diaz immediately went on leave, the source said.

Diaz's leave was supposed to end on March 1 but was extended by camp Aguinaldo to April 1 for still unknown reasons.

Diaz, who has served as Estrada's security chief since the former actor was vice president, is supposed to return to his mother unit, the Marine Corps, when his leave expires.

Diaz was a full colonel when he was appointed PSG commander late 1999.

It was at the PSG that he got his first star as brigadier general, a promotion, which was protested by a segment of the military.

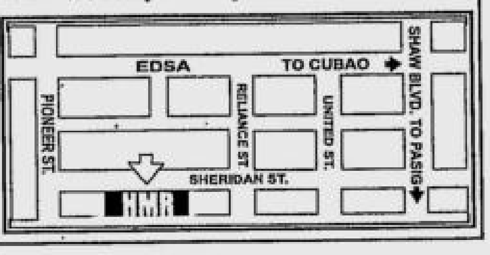
Diaz's reporting to the Estrada residence has been monitored by military intelligence.

The monitoring of Estrada's residence as well as his movements has been tightened following reports that he intends to flee the country to escape prosecution from charges of plunder.

Dengue alert up in schools

EDUCATION Secretary Raul Roco yesterday raised the red alert in all public schools on the prevalence of dengue among school-aged children even as the Department of Health revealed an increase in dengue cases from the same period last year.

In an order, Roco instructed school officials to immediately clean up the school premises, including canteens and toilets, to ensure that there will be no breeding ground for the mosquitoes, which carry the disease. *Blanche Rivera*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Ampicillin Capsule 500 mg	7.25	Loperamide HCl Capsule 2 mg	2.75
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Bromhexine HCl Syrup 4 mg/5 mL, 60 mL	45.00	Mefenamic Acid Tablet 500 mg	3.00
Bromhexine HCl Tablet 8 mg	1.75	Multi-Vitamin Syrup 60 mL	56.00
Carbocisteine (SCMC) Capsule 500 mg	4.50	Multi-Vitamin Tablet	3.00
Carbocisteine Syrup (SCMC) 100 mg/5 mL, 60 mL	49.00	Paracetamol Syrup 125 mg/5 mL, 60 mL	36.50
Cephalexin Capsule 500 mg	11.00	Paracetamol Tablet 500 mg	0.90
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Combi Pack - INH-Rifam 300/450 mg	18.00/day	Salbutamol Syrup 2 mg/5 mL, 60 mL	42.00
Co-trimoxazole Suspension (TM-40 mg, SMZ-200 mg), 60 mL	56.00	Salbutamol Tablet 2 mg	1.75
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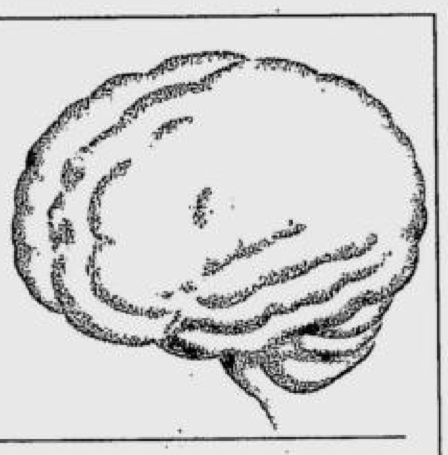
The Brain: How does it cause Obesity?

Obesity is defined as a condition in which there is an excess of body fat. Why is there an excess of body fat? Simple, we tend to overeat and forget the importance of exercise.

Studies have shown that the brain plays a major role in why we overeat. The brain is responsible for releasing chemical messengers called ***noradrenaline*** and ***serotonin*** which regulates how fast we burn calories and how we eat, respectively.

Factors like stress and genetics cause a re-uptake of these chemical messengers making us eat more than we should. The body converts food into energy and if we don't exercise often, the excess is stored as fat-*body fat*! This is shown in the deadly equation:

↑*CALORIC INTAKE* +
↓*CALORIC EXPENDITURE*
= WEIGHT GAIN

Because of this discovery, studies on weight management have focused on controlling this function of the brain by preventing the re-uptake of noradrenaline and serotonin.

In the early 80s, they were successful in synthesizing a drug called ***sibutramine.*** Sibutramine is not a dietary supplement nor is it an appetite suppressant.

You will still eat 3 meals a day, but this time, sibutramine makes you feel full faster so you eat less.

Sibutramine promotes **satiety**, or the feeling of fullness early, reducing the person's usual food intake. This way, the body does not have to store any excess as body fat (of course, the kind of food one eats also plays a role).

Sibutramine also increases energy expenditure with its ***thermogenesis effect.*** Thus affecting both equations of the energy balance:

↓*CALORIC INTAKE* +
↑*CALORIC EXPENDITURE*
= WEIGHT LOSS

The discovery of sibutramine is a major breakthrough in the fight against obesity. Specially now that obesity increases the risk of several life threatening diseases.

According to the February 2000 World Health Organization (WHO) report titled, "The Asia Pacific Perspective: Redefining obesity and its treatment", obesity has a direct link in causing Type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular diseases.

The same report also cites obesity as a determining factor in various disorders like polycystic ovary syndrome; musculo-skeletal disorders like back pain; gallbladder diseases and liver abnormalities; strokes and sleep apnea which in severe cases can result in sudden death!

Right now, studies are being done to verify the link between obesity and cancer.

Obesity has evolved into more than a "weight problem". As scientists learn more about how extensive its effects are on the human body, it is quite a surprise to know that in the end, the organ responsible for gaining weight is not the stomach, but the brain.

If you think you are overweight or obese, see your doctor and ask his opinion. He is the best person to tell you the real score and suggest ways to solve your health problem.

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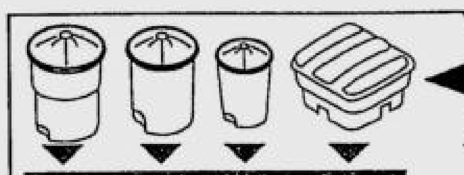
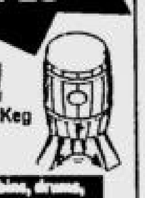
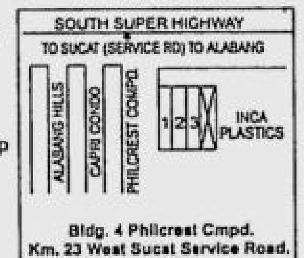
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Joker to Ping: If you can't stand the heat . . .

BY C. AVENDAÑO

IF he can't take the heat, then he should quit the senatorial campaign.

This was what People Power Coalition senatorial candidate Joker Arroyo yesterday told Puwersa ng Masa candidate Panfilo Lacson, who plans to file a libel suit against the former for saying he was corrupt.

Reacting to Lacson's threat to file a libel case against him, Arroyo reminded reporters of a famous quote made by US President Harry Truman that goes: "If you can't stand the heat in the kitchen, then you get out."

"Now if he can't stand the heat in the campaign he should quit, that's it," Arroyo said, without mentioning Lacson's name.

The PPC has made a stand not to attack by name their opponents.

"He (Lacson) shouldn't be onion-skinned," he added.

Asked whether he wasn't scared of Lacson's libel suit, Arroyo quipped: "*Hindi nga ako takot kay* Erap, *siya pa.*"

Lacson, a former chief of the Philippine National Police, said the other day he will file the libel case against Arroyo after an INQUIRER article quoted the Makati City congressman as saying that Lacson was a corrupt official in the Estrada administration.

Arroyo also claimed in the same article that Lacson was the "richest candidate as shown by his expensive campaign posters and vehicles."

"I have to protect my honor from Congressman Arroyo's malicious attack since I have worked very hard to maintain my clean name. Mr. Arroyo should also realize that the election campaign does not give him the license to besmirch the reputation of any candidate," Lacson said in a statement the other day.

Noli prefers going it alone

BY DONA PAZZIBUGAN

SAN JOSE, Occidental Mindoro—Former broadcaster Noli de Castro remains unperturbed by the possibility that he may be junked from the senatorial slate of the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino-Puwersa ng Masa (LDP-PnM) for his refusal to join their campaign sorties.

De Castro, who is running as an independent candidate, said yesterday he was not afraid of being dropped from the opposition line-up.

The former ABS-CBN news anchor admitted that he did not campaign for the rest of the LDP-PnM candidates in his own provincial campaign sorties.

"It's easier for me to convince the local candidates to include me in their sample ballots because I'm just one candidate. It will be harder if I carry the entire slate because that's 12 other candidates," he said in Filipino.

De Castro also disclosed yesterday that he had been wooing local candidates from both the administration and opposition camps.

He said some local officials of the administration Lakas-NUCD had quietly assured him of their support for his candidacy.

"You'll be surprised. I have spoken to some Lakas officials who said they would not carry all the People Power Coalition candidates. But they told me they will support me," he said.

De Castro is officially a guest candidate of the LDP-PnM. The party carries his name in all its sorties and even includes him in the common senatorial posters and other campaign paraphernalia.

Last week, LDP president and senatorial candidate Edgardo Angara said De Castro risked being dropped from the opposition slate if he continued to snub the party's provincial sorties.

De Castro yesterday surprised the LDP-PnM senatorial candidates by going with them in a foray for the first time.

He, however, clarified that the main reason he joined the campaign here was to honor the invitation of Rep. Ricardo Quintos, whom he described as his "good friend."

He also failed to assure LDP officials that he would be joining their sorties from thereon.

He said he preferred to keep to his own campaign schedule rather than go with the rest of the LDP-PnM candidates as they followed their own schedule.

"(If they will junk me) I can't do anything about that. I'm just a guest candidate," he said.

When asked for his reaction to De Castro's statements, LDP-PnM campaign manager Butz Aquino said the party would not insist that he joined all their sorties.

"He's still in. We have no reason to take him out because he already informed us of all his (provincial) commitments prior to the campaign. It's okay with us if he does not join us as long as he shows up once in a while," he said.

Aquino said it was "good enough" for them that De Castro was running as a guest candidate of the opposition rather than a guest candidate of the administration.

Gov't owes ex-cops P3.6B in pension

BY PHILIP C. TUBEZA

RETIRED policemen are complaining that government owes them P3.6 billion in pension benefits for three years.

Members of the PNP Retirees Association Inc. (PRAI) said in a press statement that they understand that the government is cash-strapped. However, they are asking the Macapagal administration not to forget their plight.

They warned that they might file a class suit if their concerns are not properly addressed.

"Where and how the government will settle all of these claims is a very big problem. Right now, the government is cash-strapped. But the retirees and pensioners will go hungry if their claims are not paid," the group said.

"There are many among them who clamor to pursue the drastic option, which is to file a class suit against the government with damages and charge those responsible for the failure of the settlement of all their claims, particularly the Department of Budget and Management," it added.

It said round 10,000 retirees and pensioners from 1991 to 1998 have yet to receive their pay differential that has accumulated to P1.6 billion.

This amount covers the period from March 6, 1998 to Dec. 31, 2001, PRAI said.

It added that 1,088 policemen who retired in 1998 have also not gotten their retirement gratuities that total to a billion pesos.

Policemen who are to retire this year are supposed to get their terminal leave pay and gratuities to the tune of P1.7 billion. But up to now only P900 million has been allocated for them.

PRAI is urging government to dutifully implement the laws about the retirement of policemen, particularly the statute ordering the release of the pensioners' benefits within six months after they retire.

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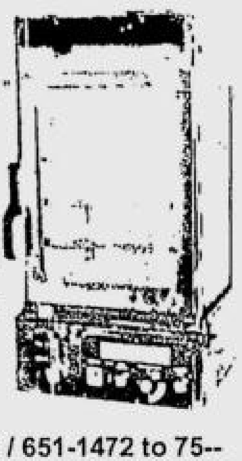

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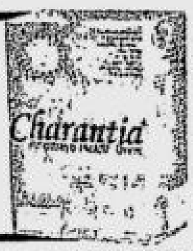

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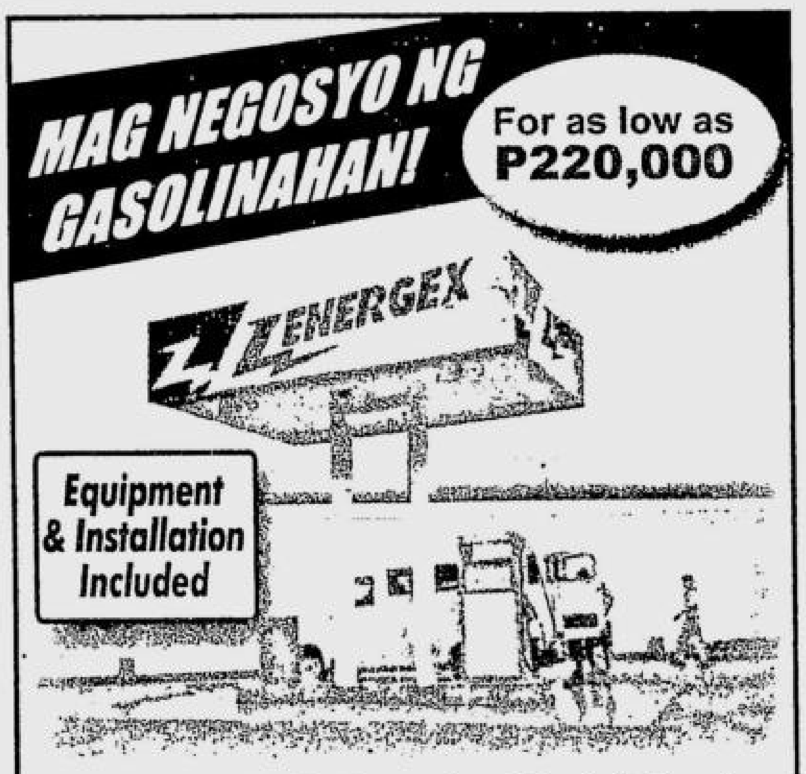
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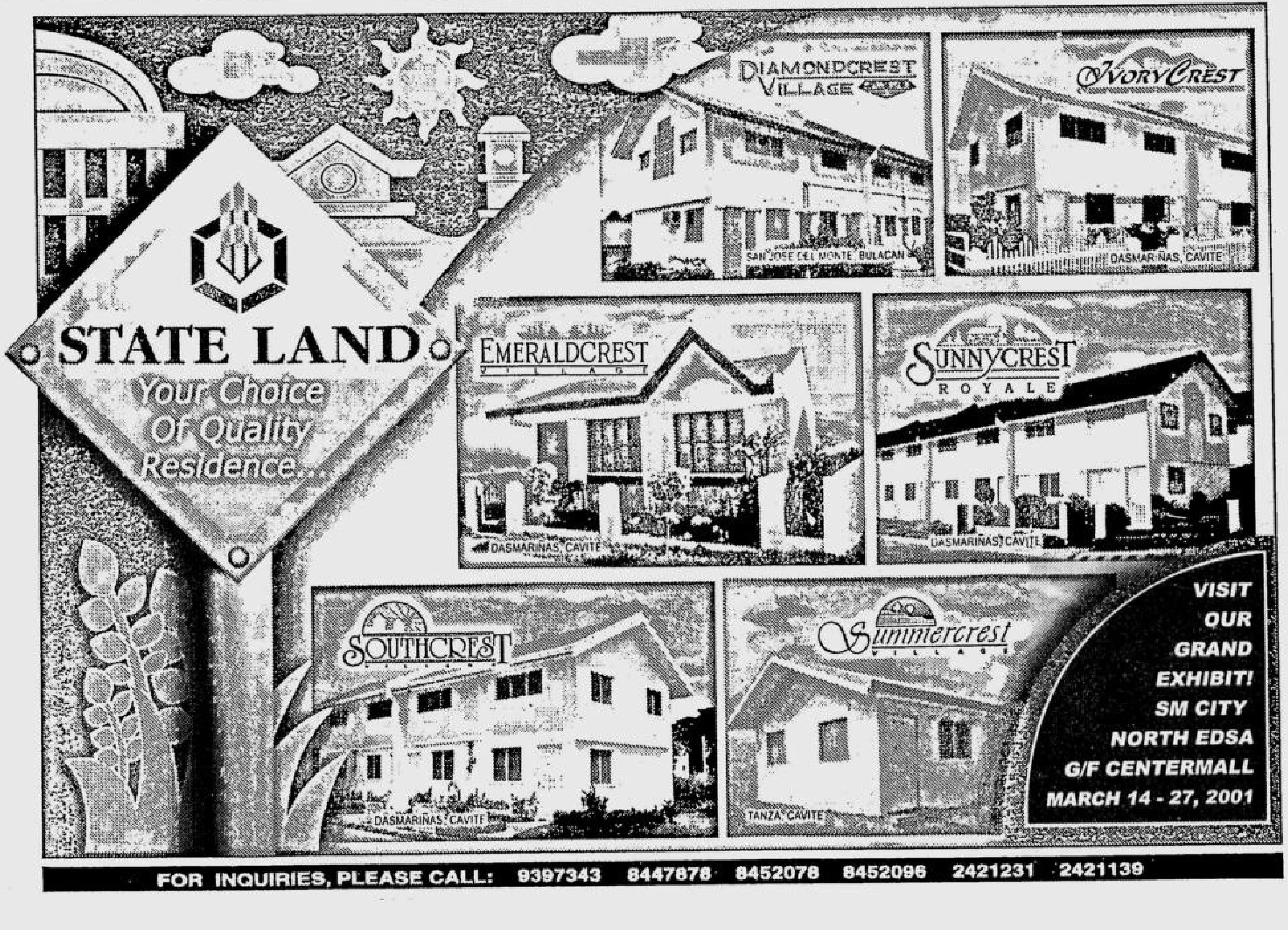

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Irene faces investigation in Germany

(From page A1)

anything right now," Rahmsdors said, and hung up.

In Malacañang, President Macapagal-Arroyo directed the Presidential Commission on Good Government to "work" on Irene's accounts in Switzerland, and to "seek the evidence" that would show how the Aranetas had tried to launder these funds.

The Philippine government was apparently in the dark about the investigation by the German authorities.

Asked for Malacañang's reaction to the Aranetas' alleged attempt to launder Irene's accounts, Executive Secretary Renato de Villa said the matter was discussed at the Cabinet meeting that started at 9 a.m. yesterday.

"The PCGG was here at the briefing this morning," De Villa said. "They have been asked to pursue the cases that they are pursuing and receive any evidence that may be brought to their attention so that they can move forward."

Former Solicitor General Francisco Chavez urged the government not to lose time in reorganizing the PCGG, which has been orphaned by the resignation of its chair, Magdangal Elma, and three commissioners.

"As early as (now), the government should clarify its policy on the recovery of ill-gotten wealth," Chavez said in a phone interview yesterday. "Otherwise," he said, "there would be a counter-friction in the movement of the ill-gotten wealth (and the PCGG.)"

Up to the PCGG

De Villa said that going by what was said at the Cabinet meeting, the PCGG had yet to officially receive "any evidence or any documents that can be used as evidence."

He said Malacañang would leave to the PCGG the matter of whether it would coordinate with the German authorities on the matter.

"Well, it's for them to handle it," De Villa said, adding:

"(The PCGG) is a government agency dedicated to pursue the so-called Marcos wealth, and therefore, we will have to leave it to them to make their judgment according to what they are holding.

"As I said, the PCGG has been asked to seek the evidence. And if there is evidence for a renewed effort in that particular case, then that should be done. It is the evidence that is material."

Only one official, Commissioner Jorge Sarmiento, is left at the PCGG to parry accusations that the agency assigned to recover the Marcoses' alleged ill-gotten wealth, has failed miserably in its task.

Sarmiento, now officer in charge of the PCGG, attended yesterday's Cabinet meeting to receive instructions from the President.

De Villa said the President would soon "reenergize" the PCGG by appointing a new chair and commissioners.

The PCGG had earlier tried to downplay the INQUIRER report, citing the report it received from the Swiss Federal Banking Commission that said Irene's account 885931 at the UBS was not hers, and that it was closed in 1999.

From Sydney, Australian investigator Reiner Jacobi and his lawyer, Dr. David Chaikin, an anti-money laundering expert, yesterday said the PCGG was protecting the Swiss banks.

"They have become apologists for the Swiss. We do not regard them anymore as a proper government agency. The PCGG is rubbish," said Jacobi, whom the agency hired in 1988 to investigate the Marcos wealth.

He said he had since found out that the information he provided to the PCGG, especially during the Aquino and Ramos administrations, was used merely to try to force the Marcoses to forge "dirty deals."

JACOBI: Instead of Irene signing it, Greggy signed it. He panicked.

"The PCGG should be scrapped," Jacobi said.

He also said the PCGG's reaction to the INQUIRER report was "stupid."

In danger

Tim Boardman, a former partner of Marcos friend Henry "Hank" Hutcherson in the supposed money-laundering deal, yesterday phoned the INQUIRER to say that the lives of Jacobi and Chaikin could be in danger.

He said that Hutcherson and Curtiss Waters, also a party to the alleged deal, were furious, and that they would go after Jacobi and Chaikin in Sydney because of the exposé.

Chaikin later confirmed the threat to their lives.

He said it was Jacobi who was in greater danger because the latter played a key role in coordinating with the German authorities to catch the Aranetas in the supposed money laundering.

"Desperate people are dangerous," Chaikin said of Waters and Hutcherson.

He said he and Jacobi had "already taken precautions."

"We expected this to happen once the story (on the deal) broke," he said.

Full-blown inquiry

The Senate blue ribbon committee chaired by Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr. is prepared to summon the Aranetas to a full-blown inquiry once the money-laundering attempt is verified.

"We will look into that. All we have right now are newspaper accounts, so we will have them studied by our staff," Pimentel said.

Asked to comment on the INQUIRER special report, Pimentel said: "Subject to verification, which is all I can say right now."

The blue ribbon committee has been conducting an inquiry on the Marcos wealth.

Pimentel said the investigation had been put on hold while the committee tried to track down Marcos accounts in Hong Kong.

Chavez said the government should not wait any longer to appoint new PCGG officials because the Marcoses were moving heaven and earth to secure their billions.

"The Marcoses are desperate. Nobody's looking. They'll try again. And one day, we might just see they have succeeded," he said.

Chavez also assailed the independent study presented by the PCGG to contradict the report that the Aranetas had tried to launder their money.

He said the PCGG was "blinded" by reports dealing with mere surface information that banks and other foreign agencies were allowed to reveal, but would not accept contrary developments.

Chavez, who has been critical of the PCGG because of its supposed failure to perform its task, said it was feasible for the new group of PCGG officials to work with other investigators like Jacobi.

Pecabar

Militant groups yesterday urged the President to file charges against the Pecabar law firm and push for the disbarment of all its lawyers.

Eleazar Reyes, counsel for the Aranetas, is connected with Pecabar, reelectionist Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile's law firm.

The Concerned Lawyers for Moral and Effective Leadership (Clamor) called on the law firm to explain to the Filipino people and the Bar its supposed involvement.

"I cannot imagine a Philippine law firm or a Filipino lawyer assisting the Marcoses in collecting allegedly stolen money," Clamor head convenor Dennis Funa said in a statement.

"In the first place, Pecabar should say if the letters of Irene Marcos Araneta published in the (INQUIRER) are authentic or not. They cannot invoke lawyer-client confidentiality because if they choose to remain quiet, the implication is that the letters are authentic," Funa said.

Satur Ocampo, president of the party-list group Bayan Muna, said Pecabar undermined public interest when it agreed to serve as legal counsel of the Aranetas.

Elmer Labog, secretary general of the Kilusang Mayo Uno, said the law firm should be made accountable for acts inimical to the interest of the Filipino people.

The fisherfolk group Pamalakaya, through its national chair Rodolfo Sambajon, sought Enrile's disqualification from the senatorial race.

But if Enrile would be allowed to remain in the running, Sambajon said, the electorate should give him a dose of his own medicine by not voting for him. ***With reports from Juliet L. Javellana and Andrea Trinidad-Echavez***

Greggy got power of attorney from Irene

(From page A1)

dress); April 20, 1948 (date of birth); and Manila (place of birth).

"This power of attorney confers the authority to transact, vis-à-vis Deutsche Bank, all business directly connected with the keeping of the account/safe custody account," the official bank document said.

Under Irene's grant of power of attorney, Greggy may close her individual accounts and safe custody accounts but only "until after the death of the accountholder."

"In the case of more than one accountholder, this authorization only applies after the death of all accountholders," the document said.

Greggy is also entitled to:

- Dispose of any balances in Irene's favor (e.g., by means of remittance orders, cash withdrawals, checks).
- Open for her further sub-accounts/sub-safe custody accounts under the aforementioned customer master number.
- Utilize granted loans.
- Make use of the possibility of temporary account overdrafts on a normal banking scale.
- Buy and sell securities and foreign exchange and ask for delivery thereof.
- Take delivery of and acknowledge settlement notes, account statements, securities, safe custody account and dividend/interest statements, as well as other settlement notices and messages.

What he can't do

However, the power of attorney does not entitle Greggy to:

- Open further accounts/safe custody accounts under a different customer master number.
- Conclude and amend loan agreements.
- Conclude future and forward exchange agreements.
- Transact precious metals business.
- Dispose of safes or assets held in safe custody, or to conclude agreements in this connection.
- Apply for customer cards, EC cards or credit cards.
- Create or cancel collateral
- Take delivery of account or loan termination notices.
- Issue exemption applications for investment income.
- Apply for online banking service.

According to the document, Greggy is not entitled to grant sub-powers of attorney.

Also, the accountholder, Irene, may revoke the power of attorney at any time. But if she does that, she has to inform the bank without delay and, "as far as possible, in writing, for reasons of evidence."

"The power of attorney does not expire upon the death of the accountholder; it remains in force for the heirs of the deceased accountholder," the document said.

Protecting himself

"Greggy didn't have to open a bank account on that day because he could use Irene's account. He could transfer money," said David Chaikin, lawyer of Australian investigator Reiner Jacobi.

Chaikin added: "What he did in order to protect himself was he let Irene open the account, and he had power of attorney over that account. So he could actually transfer money in that account as much as he wants to.

"He doesn't need to consult Irene or get her signature."

Jacobi noted that Greggy was "more concerned with that piece of document" because, as Irene's husband told the "friendly banker" of Deutsche Bank, it was the document that "could destroy him."

In fact, it was the one document that Greggy wanted the bank to give him—he demanded the original copy—when he panicked the next week, particularly on Feb. 20, Tuesday.

There were two documents concerning the agreement on the Irene Araneta accounts in Switzerland, particularly the deposits at UBS.

The "private and confidential" sub-agreement submitted to Deutsche Bank was just an "explanation" of the main agreement between Irene and other parties.

Both were dated Feb. 14, 2001. The main agreement was not anymore submitted to the bank, but concerned the sharing arrangement between Henry Horace Hutcherson III, or Hank, the American businessman whom the Aranetas understood to have provided the friendly banker, and Edna Camcam, longtime mistress of the late Fabian Ver.

Green light

So what happened after Irene Araneta opened her new account at Deutsche Bank and executed documents for the transfer of the UBS funds to Germany?

Chaikin said it was like a green light was turned on for the parties involved to come out of the woodwork and open their own separate accounts at Deutsche Bank, with the same friendly banker.

Those who came on Feb. 15, Thursday, were Hutcherson; Camcam; Curtiss Waters, an American friend of the Marcoses who had recommended Hutcherson's involvement; and Eleazar Reyes, lawyer for the Aranetas.

"They went to the bank and opened accounts in their own names separately," Chaikin said, recalling that the transactions occurred between 10 a.m. and 11 a.m.

"They all took their passports down and they all signed the documents and gave all the details," he said.

All these happened, he said, at the same private banking office with the secret surveillance cameras on.

And then the banker told Reyes, the Aranetas' lawyer, that Irene had to specify which branch of the UBS was holding her accounts under 885931, because UBS AG in Zurich was not responding.

"What happened was that when Irene wrote the letter to the UBS, she mentioned the account number 885931 but she didn't mention UBS Lugano (in Switzerland). So the banker asked Attorney Reyes to get Irene to telephone him to tell him which branch of the UBS was it," Chaikin said.

He was referring to Irene's Feb. 14 letter to UBS Zurich, instructing the manager of the bank's accounting department to close her accounts there, "including but not limited to all accounts and sub-accounts under my client account number 885931."

This letter also directed the "immediate transfer of all of the above mentioned accounts" to Irene's 7690779 account at Deutsche Bank.

In writing

At 9 a.m. the next day, Feb. 16, Greggy, Irene and Reyes visited the friendly banker just after Deutsche Bank had opened.

"They did two things. One is that Irene told the banker that it's UBS Lugano (that was holding account 885931)," Chaikin said.

The banker said this was an "important piece of information," and asked that it be put in writing.

On Irene's instructions, he wrote out the letter saying, "Please kindly send my documents to UBS Lugano, not Zurich," which she signed.

This Deutsche Bank document, signed by Irene herself, is another piece of evidence showing that account 885931 still exists, and that it is being kept in UBS Lugano, Chaikin said.

Earlier, the UBS has repeatedly denied holding Irene's accounts under that client number. Irene and the rest of the Marcoses have also denied knowledge of the account.

According to Chaikin, the second thing that the Aranetas did on that Friday was to indicate Greggy's wish to open a corporate account with Deutsche Bank.

"In other words, what Greggy wanted to do was, as soon as the money came into the bank in Irene's name, he would transfer the money to a corporate account and close Irene's account," Chaikin said, adding:

"That's what all good money launderers would do. But he didn't have the corporate documents with him, the registered documents."

To open a corporate account in Deutsche Bank, or any other bank for that matter, "certain corporate registered documents" are required, Chaikin pointed out.

Panic

The Aranetas and company were now expecting that the money would come in that weekend.

"They all waited around to see their money come in," Chaikin said.

He said that when no funds were transferred, Greggy panicked.

"What Greggy tried to do, he contacted the bank and (said) he wanted to get back, not Irene's documents, but the one he signed," Chaikin said.

"He wanted to get his document out. It was the only document he signed that incriminated him. There was nothing else," Chaikin said.

Greggy wanted the original document wherein Irene granted him power of attorney, and which he had signed.

But Chaikin noted: "Banks don't (return) documents after the signing. They give you a copy, but not the original."

The Aranetas went back to Deutsche Bank early on Feb. 20, Tuesday.

"Greggy tried to get his power of attorney back, but they (the bank) said no," Chaikin said.

According to Chaikin, Greggy told the friendly banker that he wanted to cancel his instructions to Deutsche Bank, and that Irene also wanted to cancel her earlier instruction to transfer the money from UBS Lugano.

Greggy then asked the banker to write a letter canceling their earlier letters of instruction regarding Irene's account.

It read: "Please kindly cancel our instructions for transferring funds—accounts should be opened."

It was Greggy, and not his wife, who signed the document dated Feb. 20, 2001.

It turned out to be a grievous mistake.

Null and void

"The problem with this document is it's totally null and void," Jacobi said, pointing out that Deutsche Bank was "sitting down with Irene and Greggy."

"And he writes down Irene Marcos Araneta on top, dated Feb. 20, 2001, but it was signed by Greggy," Jacobi said.

"Therefore, they got all confused, they got all nervous. Instead of Irene signing it, Greggy signed it. He panicked. He didn't realize it," Jacobi said.

"Because up to that stage he was trying to keep his name out of it, except for the power of attorney. That shows his knowledge about the instructions. He knows what's going on, and he panics and he signs (the document) himself," Chaikin said.

"Irene should have signed that," Jacobi said.

"Because she gave the instructions," Chaikin added.

But later, on March 5, the Aranetas decided that it was still a go. They sent word to Deutsche Bank that they had reactivated their instructions for the fund transfer from UBS Lugano.

Exit strategy

It was on the weekend after Irene Araneta opened her new account, No. 7690779, at Deutsche Bank that Jacobi and Chaikin decided on an "exit strategy."

The two men felt that they had achieved their purpose. "We had the documents in the bank," they said, referring to the official documents that the Aranetas had signed.

But Irene and Greggy and the rest of the group waiting for the fund transfer from UBS Lugano were not only expectant but also edgy.

Hutcherson was nagging Chaikin, demanding to know what went wrong. He himself was being made to account for the delay by Camcam and Waters, he said.

Jacobi was compelled to come out with the exit strategy, to allow the Aranetas and their group to continue thinking that everything was still okay.

On Feb. 19, Monday, Jacobi told Hutcherson that someone might have alerted the UBS about the money transfer, and that the constant comings and goings of the Aranetas and their group at Deutsche Bank that week might have made certain people suspicious.

"I graciously, liberally used Tim's name," Jacobi said, referring to Tim Boardman, Hutcherson's American partner whom Waters had eased out of the deal.

"Hank, you better get out of Germany. I think Tim contacted UBS," Jacobi said, recalling what he told Hutcherson.

"And of course, he sh-t on himself," Jacobi said.

He said he also told Hutcherson, "Let's all calm down for a week or so. Let's go back home."

And, he said, they believed him.

"It was easy to let Hank believe that somebody was destroying the case. And they didn't want to have this transfer destroyed. (They would) leave everything the way it is and then come back in two, three weeks, when everything has calmed down," Jacobi said.

Double dealing

Boardman had claimed that Waters made a threat on his life a day after Irene Araneta opened her account at Deutsche Bank.

"We've had some arguments prior to that over the way they were trying to do this business because I didn't trust Hank anymore. They thought to keep me in line to get this transaction completed," Boardman said, adding:

"Hank was double dealing. He was trying to get a bigger piece for himself.

"Curtiss told me that these people (the Aranetas) were very, very powerful people with the means to have me killed. I said 'f--k off,'" he said.

Chaikin noted that with the successful opening of Irene's new account at Deutsche Bank, "now they really want to make sure that it really was gonna work."

"They wanted to reduce the danger so, step No. 1, they will intimidate," he said.

Chaikin said that the Aranetas also needed a friendly banker at the UBS for the fund transfer to be successful.

Without this factor, he said, the UBS might not allow the transfer because of the big amounts involved.

"If the money did flow, UBS would then have a problem of getting it back. 'Give us the money that we stole from Irene Araneta, which they (the Marcoses) stole from the Filipino people,' This must be a difficult PR argument," Chaikin said.

Reactivation

On March 5, exactly three weeks after she opened her new account at Deutsche Bank, Irene Araneta directed the bank to "reactivate" her instructions for the fund transfer and to disregard Greggy's instruction to cancel.

Her latest letter was addressed to Deutsche Bank, specifically to the friendly banker with whom she and Greggy had been dealing.

It was faxed directly to the bank from the Pecabar law office of the Aranetas' lawyer, Eleazar Reyes.

The letter read: "As you are aware, you were presented with four sets of instructions on Feb. 14, 2001, related to my accounts. Please use this fax document as authorization to reactivate all of the aforementioned instructions in the following manner:

Upon your receipt of this fax, you shall immediately reactivate the first set of instructions relative to the closure of my UBS AG accounts and the transfer/remittance of all deposits therein to my account with your Bank.

When you shall have advised me that my account with your Bank has been credited in the amount of at least US dollars: One Million not later than 15 March 2001, then the three other sets of instructions relative to payments to other parties, shall immediately be reactivated.

This authorization shall remain in effect until further notice."

Irene signed using her full name: Irene Marcos Araneta. ***(To be continued tomorrow)***

DENR chief orders review of Erap orders

By Cynthia D. Balana

THE ACTING chief of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources yesterday ordered a review of all directives and proclamations issued by former President Joseph Estrada to check possible dubious or redundant presidential issuances concerning environment and natural resources.

Acting Secretary Joerhari Gerochi said the review will cover all executive orders, memoranda, proclamations and similar directives which were signed by the ousted president during his more than two years in office in Malacañang.

The review, he said, aims to rationalize, strengthen, streamline or rescind otherwise "redundant or inutile issuances."

"The review is necessary since based on feedback, some of the issuances were contentious or were done without the knowledge of the DENR and other concerned government agencies," he said.

Among some of the "problematic issuances, Gerochi said, are Presidential Proclamation 66 and Proclamation 212.

According to him, Proclamation 66 is being challenged by the provincial government of Pampanga which is claiming control over all quarrying activities in areas within its jurisdiction as provided for under the Local Government Code.

The proclamation was signed by the former president on the ground that under the same code, the President may revert to the DENR control quarrying activities in areas that had been devolved to local governments as provided for in the Philippine Mining Act of 1995 "if the move would be in the interest of the state."

In the case of Proclamation 212, Gerochi stressed that it was prepared without the knowledge of the DENR. Thus, it resulted in the erroneous plotting of the control points for parks.

Gerochi also said that some presidential issuances like Executive Order 51 "requires strengthening." The EO creates a youth environmental corps in all Katipunan ng Kabataan to be known as Green Brigades.

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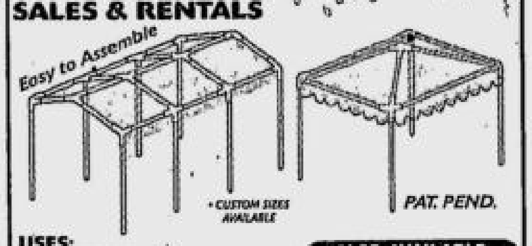

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Heirs of Sultan of Sulu want $800M for Sabah

By Rocky Nazareno

THE HEIRS of the Sultan of Sulu are asking Malaysia to pay them $800 million for the proprietary rights to Sabah state, over which the Philippines has a longstanding claim.

A source at the Department of Foreign Affairs said the sultan's heirs, who since 1885 have been receiving $5,000 a year from Malaysia as rental payments, "were just being practical when they offered to give up their proprietary claim to Malaysia for $800 million."

While the heirs of the sultan of Sulu continue to maintain its proprietary rights over Sabah, the Philippine government has retained sovereign claim over the state, formerly known as North Borneo.

The late Sulu Sultan Esmail Kiram, the uncle and namesake of the current sultan, transferred sovereignty rights "over the inhabitants and territory of North Borneo" to the Philippine Republic in 1962.

Sabah, which now forms part of East Malaysia, is located on the northeastern tip of Borneo Island adjacent to the Sulu archipelago.

According to the DFA official, the heirs had long planned to sell their proprietary rights over Sabah even before Joseph Estrada assumed the presidency.

"But the Estrada administration did not have the political will to deal with this," he said.

He added that Kuala Lumpur had approved the deal but demanded that it also be given sovereign rights over Sabah as well.

"(The heirs and Malaysia) are just waiting," the DFA official said.

Ulka Ulama, the lawyer of the heirs, said the Philippines should once and for all settle its claim over Sabah as Malaysia has already offered to buy the proprietary rights.

Ulama pointed out the administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo was the proper time to resolve the sovereignty claim as it was under the administration of former President Diosdado Macapagal that the Philippines first asserted its claim over Sabah.

He added that the father of Vice President Teofisto Guingona was one of the lawyers of the then hereditary head of Sabah, Princess Tarhata.

Meanwhile, the Philippine government has sought to intervene in the ongoing talks between Malaysia and Indonesia over the disputed islands of Ligitan and Sipadan.

The islands, located on the Celebes Sea off Borneo, are both under Malaysian jurisdiction.

A DFA official confirmed that the Philippine Embassy in The Hague, Netherlands, has sought to intervene with the International Justice Committee which will decide the dispute between Malaysia and Indonesia.

"The country is seeking intervention because of our pending claim to Sabah," said the official, who requested anonymity.

The official explained that should the IJC rule in favor of Malaysia, this could adversely affect the Philippines' own claim to Sabah, which is located near the islands of Ligitan and Sipadan.

The DFA is reportedly wary that the Malaysian government could use a favorable IJC decision on the Ligitan and Sipadan dispute as evidence to substantiate its own claim to Sabah.

"If we do not make moves to intervene, we might be (found) in default (regarding the Philippines' ownership of Sabah)," the official said.

NPC labor row ends

THE NATIONAL Press Club labor union yesterday withdrew its notice of strike following the signing of an amicable settlement with the NPC's leadership headed by club president Antonio A. Antonio, the NPC said yesterday.

The settlement was brokered by the National Conciliation and Mediation Board of the National Capital Region through lawyer Noli S. Diega, conciliation-mediator.

Humberto Basco, lawyer for the NPC, said the NPC agreed to immediately pay the employees two months bonuses and rice allowance, among other things, to settle the dispute.

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700,000 displaced in Mindanao

MILITARY offensives ordered by ousted leader Joseph Estrada against Muslim rebels last year in Mindanao displaced about 700,000 people, an official said yesterday.

Jesus Dureza, the chief government negotiator in planned peace talks with the rebels, said the Philippines is asking donor countries for help to bring the refugees back home and give them jobs to rebuild their lives.

Dureza said the government will simultaneously undertake the difficult task of looking after the war refugees and fostering talks with the separatist Moro Islamic Liberation Front, the larger of two groups waging an insurrection for a separate Islamic state in Mindanao.

He said the displaced could not wait for the result of the talks, which is expected to drag for sometime.

"It's not like a switch which you just turn off and everything stops and there is no more fighting," Dureza told a radio interview.

"It's very easy to declare war but it's very hard to wage peace."

President Macapagal-Arroyo will fly to southern Cotabato City on Wednesday to visit refugee camps and meet with officials working to resume the talks with the MILF.

Since becoming president Jan. 20, Ms Macapagal has worked to resume peace negotiations with the MILF and the communist guerrillas, who are waging a Marxist rebellion nationwide.

Last month, she declared a unilateral ceasefire with the MILF. A rebel spokesman, Eid Kabalu, said they would officially inform the government this week of their decision to reopen talks.

Estrada ordered a military offensive against the MILF last year after the rebels expanded their camps and intensified attacks on government and civilian targets. The military recaptured more than 40 MILF-controlled areas, including their sprawling headquarters in Maguindanao.

The offensive led to the collapse of talks between Estrada's administration and the rebels.

The Muslim separatist rebellion in Mindanao, homeland of the country's Muslim minority, has killed more than 120,000 people and impeded progress in the country's most resource-rich but one of its poorest regions. *AP*

Red Cross fund drive launched

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo will be the guest of honor and speaker at the launching of this year's membership and fund drive of the Philippine National Red Cross (PNRC) to be held on March 15, 6 p.m. at the Club Filipino.

The President will be introduced by Secretary Roilo Golez, National Security Adviser and PNRC vice chair.

Ms Macapagal who is also the honorary president of the PNRC is expected to present the First Couple's donation during the program.

The goal of the PNRC fund campaign this year is P292 million, just enough for the delivery of Red Cross services across the country.

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OPINION

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Kidnapped and killed

EDITORIAL

THE KIDNAPPING and the brutal murder of two students of the University of the Philippines-Baguio should spur the Macapagal administration to address more forcefully the problem of peace and order. Not all the denials by the Philippine National Police that a new crime wave is upon us can blot away the reality that within its first two months, the administration has been "welcomed" by two sensational killings that could shake public confidence in its ability to keep the peace.

The first was the daring daytime murder last Feb. 6 of communist-rebel-turned-labor-leader Filemon "Popoy" Lagman on the UP Diliman campus. Although several witnesses were able to give detailed descriptions of his killers, the police have produced nothing more than theories as to who carried out the assassination. Not a single arrest has been made to date.

Early Friday morning, another group of criminals abducted two UP students, Giancarlo Posadas Leung, 22, and Tihani Tingal, 26, from a residential area in Baguio. That night Leung's family got a call from the kidnappers who demanded payment of a P1 million ransom. The family reported the kidnapping to the local police and the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force, but it's not clear if the family paid any ransom. What is clear is that the two students are dead, executed gangland-style with a bullet each to the back of their heads.

Leung's body was found shortly before 4 o'clock Monday morning by residents of Barangay Laug in Mexico, Pampanga, who said they heard a single gunshot minutes earlier. About three hours later, Tingal's body was found about two kilometers away in a rice field in Barangay San Pablo, San Simon, Pampanga.

"We have no leads yet," Senior Supt. Ismael Rafael Rafanan, Pampanga police chief, told the media Monday. "Nobody saw who dumped the bodies." And yet Rafanan said an alarm was out for a 1995 Toyota Corolla with plate number UPS 358, which was supposed to have been used as a getaway car by the killers.

So what is Rafanan waiting for? Does he expect the killers to just present themselves to him with blood dripping from their hands? Some investigators start with less or even nothing and succeed in solving cases. Is Rafanan already making excuses for his men's failure to solve the case?

It may be unfair to judge the Macapagal administration so early, but it should face the fact that the perception is starting to grow that it is soft on crime. The previous administration touted effective law enforcement as one of its signal achievements. But that of course didn't include catching, much less punishing, then President Estrada for taking bribes from illegal gambling or amassing wealth beyond any ordinary Filipino's dreams. In addition, the Estrada administration never solved, and is in fact suspected of complicity in, two violent crimes that occurred in the last two months before its fall: the Nov. 24, 2000 abduction and possible murder of public relations practitioner Salvador Dacer and the Dec. 30 bombings in Metro Manila that left 22 people dead. Still there are some people who think life was safer, if not better, under the previous administration.

But that's neither here nor there. Debating crime statistics like PNP chief, Deputy Director General Leandro Mendoza, did with Teresita Ang-See, head of the Citizens Action Against Crime, is not the way to fight crime. Now there are not only two more kidnap victims but two dead bodies. And the PNP or the National Bureau of Investigation should get to work to find their murderers. For in the end, solving crimes and catching the criminals are all that matters. That is the only way to give justice to the victims and their families, and it is also one very effective way of taking criminals out of their vile pursuits.

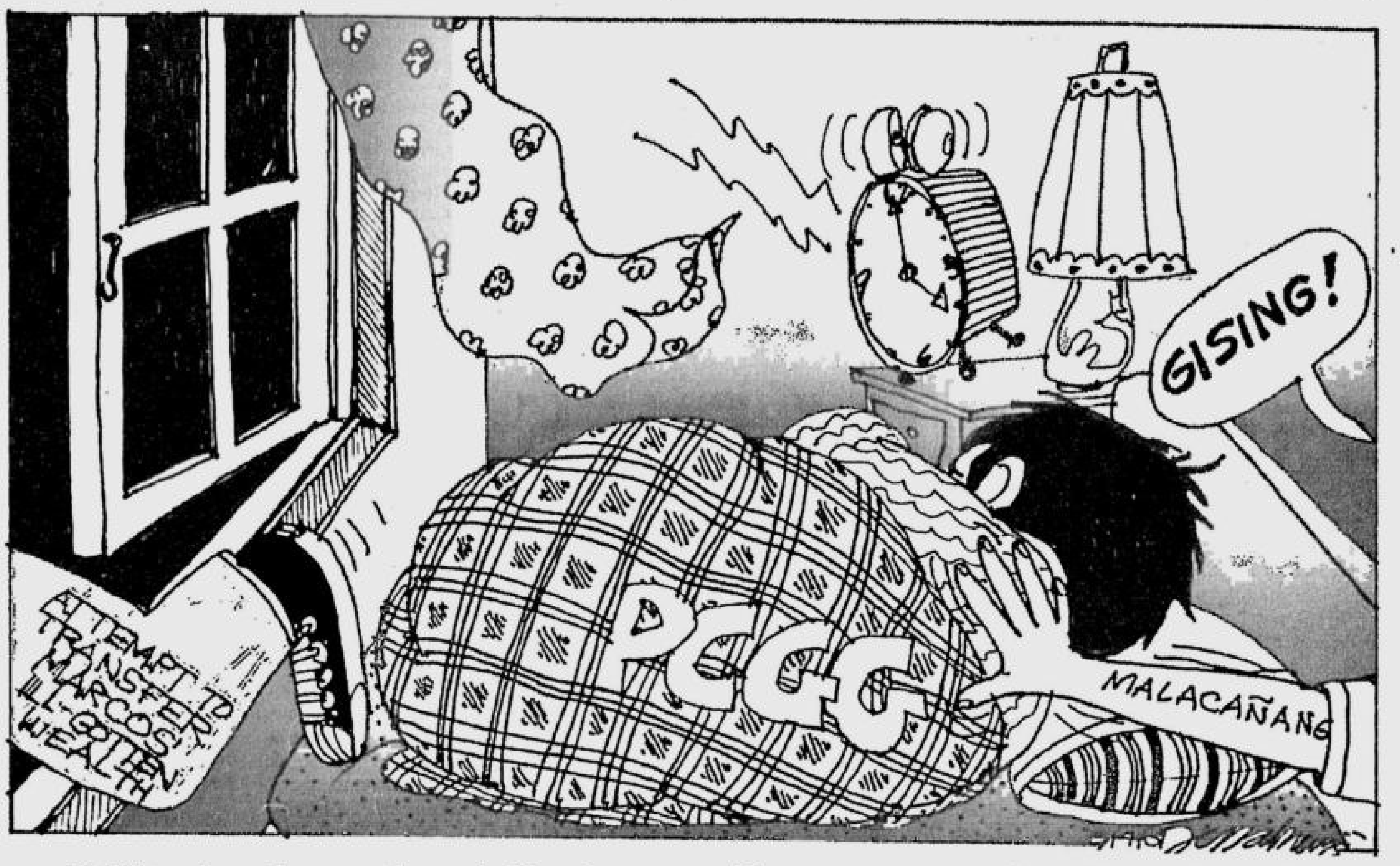
A sick industry

FOREIGN COMMENT

THERE is a simultaneous danger of overreacting to the outbreak of foot and mouth disease on a number of English and Welsh farms and missing the ways in which this latest agricultural crisis ought to lead to fundamental change in the way livestock is reared, farms managed and food prepared and purchased.

Now, as never before, English animal husbandry needs to reinvent itself. As an industry it is, to put it bluntly, sick. Meat farmers do have a future, perhaps in smaller numbers, but more as conservers of land and animals and less as exploiters. Practices will need to change the length of the food chain, from slaughtering to supermarket to dining room. Food prices will have to rise—but in a nation where so many children are clinically obese, where diet and ill-health are all too closely associated and where cheap food is being increasingly shown to be unsafe to eat, that may be no bad thing.

The Guardian (London)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ATTEMPT TO TRANSFER MARCOS' ILL-GOTTEN WEALTH

Why is Comelec blind to poll power under RA 6646?

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

WHO are the lawyers of the Presidential Commission on Good Government working for anyway? Is it the government of the Marcoses? You'd think they are Marcos' defense lawyers from the way they reacted to the INQUIRER exposé that Greggy and Irene Marcos-Araneta tried to transfer billions of dollars in bank deposits from the Union Bank of Switzerland to the Deutsche Bank in Germany.

Instead of being happy about the discovery, the PCGG, through officer in charge Jorge Sarmiento, immediately dismissed the report in a press conference, claiming the UBS account has been closed. This, even with videotapes and confidential letters signed by Irene proving the contrary. Any other group of lawyers really bent on recovering the Marcos ill-gotten wealth would have jumped at this opportunity, but not the PCGG lawyers. You'd think they want the case closed now. If you have a suspicious mind, you'd suspect that they, too, would get a percentage of the $13.2 billion to be laundered. No wonder the ill-gotten wealth cases against the Marcoses have not moved these past 15 years. The PCGG doesn't want them to move.

President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo should reorganize the PCGG and put in people who are not lawyering for the Marcoses. At present, the PCGG is like a Trojan horse that is sabotaging government efforts to recover the Marcos ill-gotten wealth. Put former Solicitor General Frank Chavez and former PCGG chair Jovito Salonga on top of the present PCGG. They know the cases by heart and they are the ones consumed by the desire to prosecute the Marcoses.

* * *

The PCGG lawyers are not the only government lawyers who are deaf and blind—and incompetent. The Comelec lawyers are, too, as well as the legal advisers of President Macapagal.

Former Comelec Chair Ramon Felipe Jr. has written a letter to President Macapagal telling her that the Comelec has standby power to hold a special registration of voters. That power is provided by Section 29 of Republic Act 6646, otherwise known as the "Electoral Reform Law of 1987" which was approved on Jan. 5, 1988. ("As I See It," PDI, 3/12/01) It reads:

"Sec. 29. Designation of Other Dates for Certain Pre-Election Acts.—If it should no longer be reasonably possible to observe the periods and dates prescribed by law for certain preelection acts, the Commission shall fix other periods and dates in order to ensure accomplishment of activities so voters shall not be deprived of the right of suffrage."

This provision has been retained verbatim in Sec. 28 of RA 8436, otherwise known as the "Computerization Law."

In fact, it is this standby power that the Comelec already invoked in advancing the period for nomination of official candidates, and later, in extending the filing of certificates of candidacy from Dec. 15 to 30, 2000, to Jan. 2 to 14, 2001. Therefore, the Comelec is not ignorant of the existence of this power.

There are two other dates still available for the registration of voters under the Omnibus Election Code, BP 881, as amended. These are the 6th and 7th Saturdays before election day which this year fall on March 31 and April 7, 2001. Therefore, the Comelec has enough power and time and dates to hold a special registration of voters without resorting to the time-wasting special session of Congress and filing a case in the Supreme Court.

The Comelec under Chair Alfredo Benipayo refuses to act allegedly because a special registration now would violate the 120-day deadline for registration before an election, or Dec. 27, 2000.

That 120-day ban, according to Felipe, applies only to the continuing or daily registration provided under RA 8189, otherwise known as the "Continuing Registration Law" approved on June 19, 1996.

Another excuse of Benipayo is that printing of other election documents would have to be stopped to allow the printing of additional voters' affidavits for use in the special registration. Felipe said there is plenty of excess voters' affidavits from past registrations. For every registration for local elections, he said, the Comelec invariably ordered about 30 million sets of voters' affidavits of which only 20 to 30 percent are used.

As for expenses, the President has promised to provide the money and, in fact, the Department of Budget and Management has already released a sizable sum.

This letter by Felipe to the President must have been received by her and presumably copies of it sent to the Comelec and her legal advisers. Why are they acting as if they're not aware of it? Why are they still going through the motions of a special session of Congress to pass a new law or the solicitor general to file a petition with the Supreme Court? Is this all a *moro-moro* to hide the truth that the government wants the 4 million youths disenfranchised in the May polls? Or did somebody swipe the letter and hide it from the President?

But even without the Felipe letter, the Comelec lawyers and the presidential legal advisers should have been aware of the existence of these laws if they're any good. So why are they playing deaf and dumb? Or are they really deaf and dumb?

Small things too

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

JOHN Silva, a consultant to the National Museum, had an interesting article on the Opinion page last Sunday. Entitled "Campaign Garbage," it took to task the candidates who were "uglifying" the country by putting up campaign posters often of illegal sizes every which place they pleased.

"Look closely at where the posters are posted. They are found on every column of the new MRT line, on waiting sheds, on factory walls, on lampposts and telephone lines and, with cruel abandon, in squatter and lower-income communities. Ironically, activist organizations and party-list organizations have joined the fray and are illegally pasting posters like traditional politicians. The same posters are not found in the enclaves of the rich or outside their offices. These candidates, by their actions, reveal themselves to be anti-poor."

Silva does not name the culprits in his opinion piece. But I've seen his complaint before in the e-mail, and he does name some culprits there. The first time his complaint came out in fact, he was addressing it to Kiko Pangilinan. He took exception to Pangilinan's posters which, just like Manny Villar's, he said, were crawling all over the place, including the sides of underpasses where they covered traffic signs. He took even more exception to Pangilinan's subsequent explanations in a TV interview. Those explanations included that he had instructed supporters to put his posters only on the prescribed places, that the Comelec had not yet issued guidelines when his posters appeared where they did and that others were violating the law themselves.

Silva pointed out that Pangilinan's posters in fact continued to appear in the wrong places even after he criticized him for it. That the absence of Comelec rules did not justify the absence of common sense, or good sense, or tastefulness. That doing as the *trapo* candidates did made him no better than them.

Joey Reyes responded by saying that he sympathized with Silva's concerns, but he warned against going overboard with it. Certainly, he said, it was unfair lumping Pangilinan together with the Santiagos and Enriles of this world. "I think that is a gross overreaction. Let us not jump to all sorts of conclusions and make accusations just because of some act of carelessness by his campaign people." We do not lack for things to really get very, very pissed off about, he said, and we would do well to direct our attention and energies to them instead.

Well, first off, I do think Reyes has a point about exercising a sense of proportion. It *is* quite unfair to penalize Pangilinan for this campaign violation, however blatant, and not so the other candidates for veritable crimes against the people. I should think the focus of our opprobrium, and our attempts to rekindle it in the hearts of the voters, should remain the 11 senators who tried to screw us during the impeachment trial, many of whom are running again.

Having said this, however, I must also say that I sympathize completely with Silva's sentiments. I do think "friendly reminders" of this sort, or even downright unfriendly ones where they are principled, should be thrown in the direction of the People Power Coalition candidates where they do not live up to the high expectations their very title should elicit from us. Indeed, they should be thrown in the direction of the activist groups seeking office through the party-list system where they do not live up to the high expectations their very existence should elicit from us. Seemingly a small or trifling thing, Silva's criticism in fact points to a test of character, one that should augur well or badly for things to come.

By itself, Pangilinan's wrongly placed posters may be dismissed as oversight or eagerness or one-upmanship. But it goes with several other things that are not so easily dismissed. Not the least of them is the widespread perception that he slipped into the coalition not because he particularly distinguished himself in the making of People Power II—other people easily did so—but because he was "winnable." And so because he was the spouse of Sharon Cuneta. That resonates, if not with *trapo* overtones, at least with "show-biz politics," the new bane of elections.

Add to that Pangilinan's claim to represent the ideals of civil society or the forces of *pagbabago*, and the demands for exemplary conduct from him increase tenfold. At the very most, you expect him to take a very high ground. At the very least, you expect him to steer very, very clear off the *trapo* highway.

If the problem is that the *trapos* are violating the law for their advantage, then the solution is to complain about *them* and show them up for the unsavory creatures that they are. The solution is not to follow their lead—or, worse, beat them to it.

There is one more important reason why "friendly reminders" of this sort are imperative. Which is the monumental danger of thinking that we should put progressive individuals in government at all costs. By hook or by crook, as the phrase goes. Not at all. I should think the way we achieve things is just as important as achieving them. Progressive individuals who get to power by not very progressive means do not remain progressive for very long. Progressive individuals who make too many concessions to gain power will continue to make too many concessions to keep it.

I've seen it happen again and again. The last time only with the recently deposed Erap administration. I've seen friends join it with the hope of changing it in the direction of reform only to have themselves changed in the direction of reaction. I've seen them, when given the option to resign, insist that *they* have to be there because they represent the forces of *pagbabago*: without them, the public would suffer. Once we start thinking that we in ourselves represent change quite independently of what we do, or indeed even while subverting change by what we do, we repeat the cycle all over again. You are not principled at the very start, you will not be principled at the very end. You do not take the high ground at every point in time, you will not take the high ground at any point in time.

I do not think Pangilinan has reached this pass, and I will vote for him in May, as I will the other People Power Coalition candidates. But I will add my voice to Silva's in making this friendly reminder early in the day, when it can still matter. It's a small thing, but the kind from which truly big things arise.

Of hamburgers and steaks

HIGH BLOOD

Naty Lapuz-Templo

WE'D also like to know the concerns of the sixtysomething and above, what makes their blood pressure rise or makes them sit back, content that all's well with their world and with themselves. **—Ed.**

"YOU are what you eat," intoned Father G, the good-looking UST priest-teacher in our Philosophy 101 class, some decades ago. Being a true blue Spaniard, he actually said "Dyou are what dyou eat."

Seeing our blank, uncomprehending, fresh-from-high-school faces, he elaborated, "If dyou eat *banggus*, the *banggus* becomes dyou; if dyou eat a cabbage, the cabbage becomes dyou."

"Huh?" We were getting used to the accent. It was the idea that intrigued us.

Father G's big brown eyes under bushy eyebrows would concentrate on the pretty fair-skinned *mestiza* in the front row who dared sound off her incredulity. "Dyou don't believe me, heh?" he would sneer with a withering smile, but I think what he really wanted to hear was a noisier, more wordy, more extensive reaction.

Fortunately for my pretty classmate, who was reddening under his challenging gaze, some eggheads or intellectual type gentlemen would start asking questions or making comments, and that would trigger an exchange of philosophical profundities or inanities for the rest of the hour. It never failed to wake up the whole class and, in a way, make the teacher happy.

I recall this little classroom episode as we are confronted with the present-day scare called "mad cow" disease.

Father G's words reverberate from the past, "You are what you eat."

If what the good Dominican father said is true (and we tend to take our teachers' word as gospel truth, don't we?), then the pig becomes you (pardon the crude language) when you eat pork; the dog becomes you when you eat *azucena*; the cow becomes you when you eat beef. I wonder if the formula can be put another way: you become a pig, a dog, or a cow when you eat their meat, and more precisely, a sick cow when you eat "sick" beef. Gross, isn't it?

Recent reports have it that thousands of cows were discovered to have been afflicted with that tongue-twister of a sickness (bovine spongiform encephalopathy) in Britain and were consequently destroyed. Also, more than 80 people have, since 1986, died from an ailment called Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (sounds to me more like a Russian biscuit than a killer), that is traced to that mad cow thing.

If it is any consolation, the human sickness, they say, will not manifest itself until some 10 years later. Still it can be alarming for senior people, even if at some point in their lives they may show signs of Alzheimer's, loss of sleep, or mild dementia, which are some of the symptoms of CJD.

To be very sure, though, we are advised by health authorities to eat only local beef, at least while the mad cow disease alert is on. (We are heartened to observe that several tons of unauthorized European beef were promptly reexported to the originating countries.) So, go ahead and have your fill of hamburger, T-bone steak, *bulalo* and *tapa*, as long as they come from Batangas or Masbate cattle. This will not only help our local cattle industry, but it will also save us some money, since local beef is cheaper than the imported variety.

Because of another foreign-based animal condition called foot and mouth disease (afflicting sheep, goats and hogs) which is currently in the news too, maybe it is time we taught our taste buds to be more nationalistic. We may be a people with colonial mentality, but coming down with an imported disease is not our idea or upper class or high society living.

I don't know about you, but I have long declared a unilateral war against pork and beef, whether native or imported, after learning that they can create havoc in one's heart, blood pressure and cholesterol level. These days when I approach a richly appointed buffet table at a party or a restaurant, I look at the tempting shiny, golden brown, crispy *lechon* and write it off in my mind as poison; the inch-thick, juicy, tender steak as a mortal enemy. It is by psyching myself thus that I win my occasional battles.

But at home we still serve chicken meat, even if, as my daughters used to warn in their younger years, "someday we will grow feathers." We have become fish eaters too, Lent or no Lent. (I think it is more romantic, by the way, to imagine myself swimming in the vast ocean, or a river, or even a fishpond, than grazing under the hot sun in a cattle ranch or fattening away in a piggery.)

And we always have generous servings of vegetables, since one daughter, Chingbee, has been a disciplined vegetarian these many years. Maybe it would not be so bad, after all, to be plucked from the *kangkungan*, get it? Come to think of it, although he meant to threaten his political foes with his typical *kanto* boy boast, that poor man's idol of recent history was unknowingly expressing a desirable idea, and a philosophical one at that.

Fresh fruits are a must-have in our household at all meals and, often, in between. Fortunately in the Philippines we can enjoy a variety of delectable fruits all year round, so we should take advantage of that. Doctors tell us that vegetables and fruits are definitely healthful. (To me, doctors' words, like teachers' pronouncements, are to be taken seriously.) Since they contain a lot of fibers, they sweep away from our bodies a host of toxins that can cause fatal disorders. For another thing, they are kind to the digestive system and are a great substitute for laxatives when some bodily functions decided to conk out.

I don't intend to live as long as Abraham, Moses, Methuselah and those venerable personalities in the Bible, but I think there is wisdom in adopting a diet similar to what our first parents fed on in the Garden. In this age of scientific and technological sophistication, it may sound "out of tune" to want to return to a basic, simple and idyllic lifestyle via our food intake.

Naty Lapuz-Templo, a grandmother of three, retired from government service in mid-1998 and has since been writing occasionally for weekly women's magazines.

Bush not rushing to meet Putin

NEWS ANALYSIS

Tom Raum

WASHINGTON—President George W. Bush has yet to meet Russian President Vladimir Putin and seems in no rush to do so. As they wait, grievances on both sides multiply.

New spy revelations—disclosures of an alleged longtime Russian mole at the FBI and a US-built eavesdropping tunnel beneath the Russian Embassy—are just the latest irritants.

"Our relations with the Russians haven't been this bad since the Cold War," said Republican Rep. Curt Weldon of Pennsylvania, a leading congressional authority on Russia.

The Bush and Putin governments have sparred over missile defense, Nato expansion, International Monetary Fund loans and dealings with Iran and Iraq.

The White House wants "good relations with Russia, straightforward and direct," spokesperson Ari Fleischer said. But it has yet to announce any plans for a Bush-Putin meeting. Their first get-together may be in late July, on the sidelines of an annual summit of the largest industrial democracies in Genoa, Italy.

Weldon, just back from his 23rd visit to Moscow as head of a bipartisan panel that meets regularly with the Russian parliament, considers this a mistake. "Bush is going to have a real challenge putting things back on track" and should not wait until the Italy conference for a face-to-face meeting, he said. "It should be sooner rather than later."

Other advisers suggest the Bush national security team is purposely taking its time to signal an intention to put relations with Russia on a more normal footing. For instance, Bush has no plans to name a special envoy to Russia, as former President Bill Clinton did.

Clinton and former Russian President Boris Yeltsin forged a warm personal friendship, marked by bearhugs and backslapping in public. Few expect such behavior between the cool, pragmatic Putin and the cautious Bush.

The latest spying revelations are dramatic, but may pose little long-term damage to relations between the two nuclear powers. "People in both countries know spying goes on all the time. We dig tunnels, they dig tunnels," said Keith Bush, an expert on Russia at the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

Relations turned frosty with the US-led Nato campaign against Yugoslavia in 1999. More recently, Moscow condemned Bush's ordering last month of US and British air strikes in Iraq.

Russians voice particular alarm over Bush's advocacy for a multibillion-dollar national missile defense shield, considering it a violation of the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty and a threat to global stability. Putin has countered with his own missile defense plan for Europe.

"The 1972 ABM treaty is like an axis to which a whole series of international security agreements is attached," Putin said last week. "As soon as we pull out this axis, all of them will automatically fall apart. The whole of today's international security system will collapse."

Other areas of contention:

- The administration's opposition to further easy-money terms for Russia. Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill called efforts by the IMF and the Clinton administration to rescue Russia during the 1998 ruble crisis "crazy."
- Russia's sale of missile technology to Iran, North Korea and other countries. Putin's visits to Iraq, Cuba and North Korea also raised eyebrows.
- US support for additional eastward expansion of Nato.

Many congressional conservatives want the three Baltic republics, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, eventually included in the alliance. That would infuriate the Russians, who view them as part of the former Soviet Union.

Secretary of State Colin Powell conceded "a unique set of sensitivities" on the Baltic states, But he told the House International Relations Committee, "Russia will never be given a veto as to whether they come in or not come in."

"The US-Russia relationship is troubled both ways," said retired Rep. Lee Hamilton, a one-time chair of that committee. Americans are frustrated by Russian's failure to more fully embrace democratic reforms, dismayed by widespread corruption and nervous about Putin, the Indiana Democrat said.

"But you could flip it around," said Hamilton, now director of the Woodrow Wilson International Center. "The Russians are suspicious of Americans, too. They think we engineered the collapse of the Soviet Union and that we're now holding back their development." ***AP***

Rewriting the history of Cebu

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

MAD cow mania has hit Cebu and one of the first casualties was *pochero*. My usual method for sniffing out the best *pochero* place is to survey the busiest ones around the Cebu *capitolio* all the way down the street toward Fuente Osmeña. The one with the most diners is often the best. My method does not require getting off the vehicle and entering the restaurant to see if Doreen Fernandez's smiling face on a framed review is displayed more prominently than the business and health permits. On my last Cebu visit, *pochero* crowds were sparse and I could not even find the *pocheruhan* recommended by Fe Susan Go, Southeast Asia librarian of the University of Michigan.

Deprived of my *pochero* fix, I reflected on the way media have made us aware of mad cow disease half the world away. Mad cow is new but why worry about hoof and mouth disease (HMD) now when this has been with us for a long time? Have you noticed the foot baths at airports? These are not for airport cleanliness—they prevent the spread of HMD. I remember asking my students to write an essay on the Battle of Mactan from various points of view: Magellan's, Lapu-Lapu's, even one from the eyes of a fish! What would the Battle of Mactan be like if we had it live on BBC, CNN or "TV Patrol"? Metro Cebu has changed since my first trip there as a boy. Modern Cebu was beyond Magellan's wildest dreams. Yet 180 years since his death on the shores of Mactan, Magellan is still remembered everywhere in Cebu. My skin crawled at the entrance to the historic Fort San Pedro (a mini-version of Intramuros) because we were greeted by a blind man with a Cebu guitar singing the Magellan song! From Zaide to Agoncillo to Yoyoy Villame, the history of Cebu is continuously being rewritten.

At the entrance to Fort San Pedro are reproductions from the illustrated manuscript of Antonio Pigafetta's "First Voyage Around the World," showing the maps of Cebu. The sign above these pictures screamed "Founding of Cebu," making me wince because Cebu was *not* founded by the Spaniards. Archaeological evidence has now pushed back Cebu's history earlier than 1521. Oriental ceramics excavated from Cebu and neighboring islands prove that there was some sort of trade between Cebu and the Chinese, Vietnamese and Thai ports long before the Asean. Magellan chose to land in Cebu, ignoring two other places because Cebu was a populous trading port. Imagine having different versions of the same history in one tourist spot.

Most memorable is the Mactan Shrine. As visitors enter the shrine they see a white obelisk with the text "*Glorias españolas a Hernando Magallanes 1866 Reinado Ysabel II siendo Gobernador Don Miguel Creus.*" This obelisk was erected by Gov. Miguel Creus in the year 1866 during the reign of Isabel II to honor Magellan and commemorate Spanish glory. In contrast to the utter simplicity and *gravitas* of the Magellan monument is a statue of Lapu-Lapu, rather badly done. Aside from the fact that we do not know what Lapu-Lapu looked like, the statue is based on the *komiks*-style superhero image created by the late National Artist Carlos V. Francisco. Sometimes I wonder if the real-life Lapu-Lapu had a toned Mr. Universe body. What if he was skinny and tubercular? Furthermore, why do artists insist on depicting Lapu-Lapu giving the death blow to Magellan when the eyewitness account says he was hit by a poisoned arrow on the right leg? Arrows and lances were aimed at the legs of the enemy because these were not protected by armor. Then Magellan was pierced on the arm by a bamboo spear, his left leg hacked with a bolo. When Magellan fell face forward into the bloodied waters, a group of warriors finished him off with their bolos and spears. Perhaps Lapu-Lapu was one of the nameless people in that group but contrary to popular belief, Lapu-Lapu did not kill Magellan in a one-on-one fight.

There are two historical markers in the shrine. One, installed by the Philippine Historical Committee in 1941 reads, "Ferdinand Magellan's death on this spot. Ferdinand Magellan died on April 27, 1521, wounded in an encounter with the soldiers of Lapu-Lapu, chief of Mactan island. One of Magellan's ships, the Victoria under the command of Juan Sebastian Elcano, sailed from Cebu on May 1, 1521 and anchored at San Lucar de Barrameda on Sept. 6, 1522, thus completing the first circumnavigation of the earth." The other, shorter marker was installed a decade later in 1951 and reads, "Here on April 27, 1521 Lapu-Lapu and his men repulsed the Spanish invaders, killing their leader, Ferdinand Magellan. Thus Lapu-Lapu became the first Filipino to have repelled European aggression."

Why the difference in interpretation? The marker installed in 1941 was drafted by Filipino historians when the Philippines was still a Commonwealth under the United States while that in 1951 was installed when the Philippines was independent. From colonial mentality in 1941 to rabid nationalism in 1951, these markers reflect more than the battle of Mactan, they show the rewriting of history from a Filipino viewpoint. Rewriting Cebu history will affect Philippine history and that can be done despite a drop in *pochero* eaters.

* * *

Comments are welcome at ambeth@admu.edu.ph

For Raquel, her soul sisters and friends

OUTLOOK

Rigoberto Tiglao.

I COULDN'T write in the past two weeks. And I wish I never had to write this piece.

But I want to tell the whole world about Raquel. She was my soul mate with whom I shared my entire adult life so far. Her life and her dying were poetry, and she had a message for us.

After a year of battling cancer, she asked to be brought to the hospital on Feb. 24. Not because of any hope of treatment. She told me years ago how she pitied a family with a house where someone had died, as that seemed to permanently darken a home that had been full of life and laughter.

She didn't give up right away. The next day, she summoned all the strength left in her body, devoured by cancer down to bare skin and bones. Bedridden for three months, she stood up from her bed and walked a few steps. She wanted to make a final heroic effort to beat death by the sheer force of her will and her love for us.

But nature is unfeeling. The next day, she asked me, my daughter Ria and my sons Xandro and Dart not to leave her bedside even for a moment. She was bidding us farewell.

Raquel asked us to embrace her, even if the slightest pressure on her cancer-ravaged bones was an agony for her. For the last time, in tears she said. She said again and again how much she loved us.

She then dozed off into a peaceful sleep, and our crying abated. While she, I, my daughter and my two sons slept through the night together in the hospital room, she fell into coma.

Even in her dying, she wanted to make things not too hard for us. She lay comatose as if she thought that the sight of her unconscious for a day would slowly ease us into the acceptance of her death.

The next day, Feb. 28, at half past noon, Raquel drew her last breath. It was as if she even picked her day of dying, for our sake. It was a sunlit day with a deep-blue sky, which somehow mollified the nightmare of her death.

She even seemed to have calculated that her close friends and her brother Raul would likely pay her a visit at lunchtime. Raul, Teret, Princess, Oyie, Indai, Reena and even a long-lost friend Wendy did—but to watch over her body, help us make all the arrangements for her funeral and tell her many friends immediately that she had passed away.

Tell them not to bring flowers, she told me matter-of-factly before she fell into a coma. Just tell them to give donations to the Women's Crisis Center, they need the funds. It was the organization she loved and devoted the last 10 years of her life to.

That was so much Raquel. She was no card-carrying do-gooder, definitely not the be-charitable-so-you'll-go-to-heaven type of person. There were people she just detested, whom she refused to be friends with.

But it was second nature for her to be so much concerned with others' needs and troubles, forgetting her own. Two weeks before her death, when she could barely talk, she scribbled a note to a visitor, her close friend Vangie, whose husband Bert had been sick: "Thanks for visiting. Go home now. Take care of Bert. He needs you."

There are two images of Raquel which people of our world remember of her.

One is of Raquel the fearless student activist, at the frontlines of demonstrations in the 1970s against Marcos at the gates of Malacañang, or in a workers' strike, shouting invectives at the riot police, warning them to keep their distance or else. Because of that "Raq" got to be "Rock," then "Rocky."

She lived up to that nickname her friends gave her. Even when we were arrested in the middle of the night in 1973, and in the year and half we were in Marcos' prisons, her steely courage earned the respect even of hardened military men.

The second image of Raquel is a front-page newspaper photo in 1970: She, tightly embracing a crying, fellow activist in a violent rally, as if to shield her from the truncheons of the riot police all around them.

Both images truly represent Raquel. When she devoted her last decade to women's rights, she was still the audacious activist, this time threatening to cut the balls off of wife-batterers and rapists.

But what many would remember of Raquel was her warm smile, which she kept on even after the left side of her face was marred by her brain tumor excised in 1981. They'd remember the way she wrapped her arm around the shoulder of a person in sadness or in pain. The hours she spent sympathetically listening to people, who told her of their problems.

Words weren't necessary. Raquel's message was there: "I'm here, your soul sister. I feel for you. I know your pain."

For the person she comforted, everything else then flowed like a refreshing stream in a desert. The realization that there's another soul who's holding your hands in your darkest hours. And with that, the rediscovery of courage and hope.

Raquel defied the brain tumor and cancer that tortured her body for most of her years, to live a full and meaningful life.

She touched many people's lives with her kindness and compassion: As intense though was her anger toward cruel people and oppressors, and her passion for a just society, which inspired many to struggle on.

Raquel's life is a message to us who knew her, expressed in lines in a poem she wrote in 1977:

"Without that total, sensitive awareness
Would knowing bring about true understanding?
Oh, but for a drop of kindness
To soften and solve this sadness."

Raquel taught us that there's more, much more to life than just our own pains, our own wishes, our own dogmas, our own things.

It is the drops of kindness we give others which, by some mystical alchemy, expand to create the ocean of our lives. It is the compassion for our fellow travelers through life, the sensitive understanding of each other's troubles and loneliness that make this crazy, cold cosmos still a joyous, miraculous place.

With my daughter Ria, sons Xandro and Dart, I thank our friends, comrades, colleagues and relatives who mourned with us Raquel's death. We're grateful to her doctors Suillan Sy-Naval, Conrad Cajucom and Edwin Cruz, who showed a kind of sympathy I had thought people who see death every day in their work lose.

We would like to especially thank Raquel's soul-sisters, friends and colleagues at the WCC and Kalayaan, for the care and love they showered on her in her last year on this earth. Two of the happiest moments of her entire life were last year when the WCC with her feminist comrades and then the First Quarter Storm Foundation with our *kasamas* in the 1970s each gave her a party to wish her recovery, and to raise funds for her treatment.

Never will I ever see the intensity of love and friendship they had for Raquel.

And we may never know in our lifetimes such a kind, beautiful soul such as Raquel.

* * *

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Bizarre and absurd justice

PHILIPPINE justice is oftentimes the theater of the absurd and bizarre. I am totally dumbfounded how a ranking court like the Sandiganbayan can convict Benny Tan, a man of impeccable integrity and uncompromising principle. The Marcoses and their ilk are still free and even reigning over sensitive positions of government. True, some of them have been outwardly charged although convictions, if any, definitely appear nowhere near any horizon. Then there are Estrada and his abject confederacy who have the consummate gall to be barnstorming the country with unrestricted license, scavenging for unsuspecting votes. Indeed, certain members of this dubious ticket even appear to be scoring high in the polls. Incredible!

Again, how in the realm of justice can a responsible court convict a scrupulously honest man like Tan? And then "mercifully" sentence him to only six years in jail because he is already 78 years old? The Sandiganbayan's decision leaves me absolutely shocked and dismayed. Tan is definitely not a criminal. His lifetime endeavors in the sphere of national civics and social work attest to the man's honorable reputation. I personally know the man and I will stake all on his innocence.

Moreover, I believe that there is a just divinity that presides over the destiny of nations. Often, the divine is inscrutable and straight lines are drawn crooked. The second envelope, remember? If a good and innocent man like Tan can be wrongfully accused and convicted then, perhaps, with inexplicable irony, real justice might not be too far behind. Our courts have now lost all legitimate rationale not to arrest and convict all the bona fide scoundrels, scalawags and criminals and lock them behind bars. Of course they must also overturn Benny Tan's wrongful conviction.—**JOSE S. LOPEZ, 5th Floor, Liberty Bldg., Arnaiz Avenue, Makati City**

SPECIAL REGISTRATION IPATUPAD
SPECIAL REGISTRATION NOW!
-AKBAYAN
JUBILEE

Heed the cry of the youth

I AM writing you to lend voice to the clamor of 4.2 million of our youth to be allowed to register so as to be able to cast their votes this May.

I had earlier, even before People Power II, urged then Commission on Elections Chair Harriet Demetriou to exhaust all avenues and heed the cry of the youth.

Now that the youth have demonstrated at Edsa and all over the country that they do comprise the vital force that helped topple the Estrada administration, we do have a moral obligation to vest them the legal right (that in fact they had already exercised with People Power II), which is to choose the leader they want.

The 4.2 million would-be voters comprise a sizeable portion of our sovereignty. This constitutes 15 percent of the electorate which can decide the outcome of the election. That they were unable to register was not out of any disability on their part as the Comelec's failure, especially in the information dissemination campaign, to make it possible.

There was, to be fair, lack of funding and, if I may be so bold, a deliberate attempt to disenfranchise a segment of our population who was a threat to the governing administration then.

And indeed, that fear was shown to be valid and real when People Power II came about and more than 85 percent comprised the youth of the land, many of them in college, and are now clamoring to be allowed to register and vote.

When I authored Republic Act 8189, the Voters' Registration Act of 1996, I had precisely in mind the kind of challenge we now face when many who will come of age near voting date will in fact comprise a substantial portion of the electorate as to compose a significant element of the will of the people.

Assuming safeguards are in place to avert the entry of flying voters, it was my hope that everyone who attains the majority age at voting date will be allowed to cast his ballot and his individual choice will be reflected in the count.

President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has already declared that funding will be provided. I am at the same time well advised by experts that there is no legal prohibition to prevent this late registration. It would now seem that the Comelec has only to find the will and the means to heed the cry of the youth.—**REP. HEHERSON T. ALVAREZ, 7th Floor, LTA Bldg., 115 Perea St., Legaspi Village, Makati City**

Struggles with choice

I READ the Youngblood contribution of Ralph Doval Santos about what he went through during Edsa Dos. He wrote truthfully about how reluctant he really was when his parents asked him to come for the protest action. He said that he preferred to go with his friends for their usual gimmicks on weekends. Despite his unwillingness, he still went with his parents to the Edsa protest. In the end, he realized that everything was worth the effort.

When I read his account I was bursting with laughter inside. I realized that all of us are like Ralph at some point. Every day we are faced with so many options to choose from. And every day life demands that we should choose. Sometimes we make the right choice, sometimes we don't, sometimes we almost and a lot of times we don't choose at all. Life, indeed, is a bundle of possibilities—our choice determines its outcome. I believe that, like Ralph, we need to make a bold choice to stand by whatever option we decide to act upon. I'd like to thank this student from the Philippine Science High School for such boldness in his struggles with choice.—**VIDA LIWAG, 40 V. delos Reyes St., Outlook Drive, Baguio City**

Five linked to Abadilla murder tortured?

AS a member of Amnesty International I would like to inform you about the movement's worldwide campaign to eradicate torture. As in many other countries, torture is widespread in the Philippines which constitutes a serious violation of human rights.

In a recent case, Amnesty International has received credible information that Joel de Jesus, Cesar Fortuna, Rameses de Jesus, Lenido Lumanog and Augusto Santos, who were convicted of the murder of Rolando Abadilla in 1999, were tortured during interrogation while being held incommunicado by the police at unknown locations.

The Department of Justice has up to now failed to carry out an effective investigation into the five men's complaints of torture, in contravention of the Philippines' obligations under the ICCPR and the UN convention against torture. Amnesty International is calling on the authorities to send a clear public message to law enforcement officials that torture is a prohibited act which plays no part in combating crime.

The government should enforce prohibitions on incommunicado detention and ensure that relatives, lawyers and doctors have regular access to detainees without delay. It should ensure that lawyers are present during all interrogations. It is also of vital importance that victims of torture and their dependents obtain fair and adequate financial compensation and appropriate medical care.—**MARC BASILE, IUT, 8 Ave Aristide Briand, Montluçon, France**

TV ad ignores family values

IT is very disappointing to see the new advertisement from a well-known financial institution. The makers of the ad have all but forgotten family values in their effort to showcase high technology in banks and the modern way of doing things.

The television ad shows a whole family obsessed by what they call online banking where they transact business with the bank from their own home. The father starts the day at 6 a.m. in front of the online computer with the bank, ignoring his little boy who wishes to talk to him. Then the mother also transacts with the computer as well as the eldest son. The little boy is again ignored.

In the afternoon, the daughter and some friends also work with the computer and when the father arrives he goes straight to the computer, but when he sees his daughter using it, he uses the cell phone instead.

Before going to bed at around 10 p.m. the father again uses the computer for some transactions with the bank, then his wife is shown forcing her husband to go to bed and it is quite unreal to see the father even tapping the computer and saying, "See you tomorrow!" which I think he did not even say to his own son. At this point the little boy uses the computer.

Is this the kind of family values and relationship the banking system wants to foster? Where do religious values fit in? Are they now as disposable as other traditional values of a Filipino family because of a modern lifestyle and high technology? Let man use technology, not technology use man.—**DANILO Q. REYES, Estanquillo Street, Sta. Ana, Bulacan, Bulacan**

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Writers of letters to the editor are requested to include their complete address and telephone or pager number or e-mail address for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.

Reinterpreting the Clean Air Act

IT is disturbing to see the efforts by some sectors in government to reinterpret the Clean Air Act to go around the prohibition on incineration, when it is obvious that what is needed is implementation. Muntinlupa Rep. Ignacio Bunye has come up with his interpretation of Section 20 of the Clean Air Act which "allows the use of state-of-the-art, environmentally sound and safe non-burn technologies." Could it be that he missed the stress on "non-burn"?

The Clean Air Act is a measure to reduce air pollution. Burning of garbage, be it in incinerators or on the roadsides, smoke-belching vehicles and dirty fuels are frowned upon by the Clean Air Act because they are believed to exacerbate the environmental and public health problems brought about by airborne pollutants. Far from being a "dubious rider," the ban on garbage incineration sits very well with the objective of eliminating toxins in the air.

We understand the predicament of local officials who are confronted with loads of trash that need to be dealt with. This explains their penchant for quick fixes. What is puzzling is that despite the serious environmental, health and economic risks associated with incineration, politicians like Bunye are still captivated with this non-solution. Indeed, one is tempted to ask if Bunye and his ilk know something we don't?

The current garbage crisis and the electoral circus now in play provide the perfect money-making setup for companies and politicians obsessed with high-tech, big bucks and mega solid waste management projects. With this limited scope of vision, local, low-cost and community-oriented initiatives, which are more effective are conveniently glossed over.—**FRANCIS JOSEPH C. DELA CRUZ, toxics campaigner, Greenpeace Southeast Asia, Unit 326, Eagle Court Condominium, 26 Matalino St., Barangay Central, Quezon City**

LETTERS

PEA fund remitted to national treasury

AFTER THE MACAPAGAL administration took over in late January, we noticed a flurry of articles and commentaries in various newspapers hitting the current management of the Public Estates Authority.

Considering that the stories published were identical and the subsequent commentaries faithfully reflected the published stories, we can only surmise that the campaign is orchestrated by those who are interested on being appointed to the PEA and salivating over the imagined perks of being here.

The stories and commentaries claim that "workers have complained about the alleged diversion of some P500 million of PEA funds to Malacañang, supposedly to help resuscitate the national coffers." The same stories and commentaries claim that this move deprived the PEA employees of pay and incentives such as the mid-year bonus and other allowances.

Allow us to set the record straight. The release of the P500 million was approved by the PEA board during its Aug. 27, 1998 meeting. It was remitted to the National Treasury as reflected in Official Receipt No. 8222814 dated Aug. 4, 1998 and acknowledged by then Treasurer Leonor Magtolis Briones in her memo to the Office of the President dated Aug. 5, 1998.

And it was released to the national government because those were the funds of the national government, representing its share from the proceeds of the sale of the Alabang Stock Farm to the Filinvest Development Inc. The sale was started during the Aquino administration and concluded in the early years of the Ramos administration. The PEA was only acting as the trustee of the national government. As such, the management cannot and should not even think of giving it out as bonuses and allowances to its employees.—**ARMINDA A. ALARAS, assistant general manager, Marketing and Estates Management, and project manager, Alabang Stock Farm, Public Estates Authority, 7th Floor, Legaspi Towers 200, Paseo de Roxas St., Makati City**

Saving a cultural icon

COMMENTARY

Belinda A. Aquino

HONOLULU—We, UP alumni abroad, have received a letter from Herbert Villalon Docena, editor in chief of the Philippine Collegian, regarding the celebrated student paper's impending demise if it is not rescued by its readers, benefactors, alumni and other parties interested in keeping it alive. The University of the Philippines without the Collegian? This would be the ultimate oxymoron. It's like striking at the very heart of the country's preeminent institution of higher learning. Put another way, the Collegian has embodied the soul of the university.

It appears that a P600,000 deficit caused by increasing production costs and lack of sufficient revenue from student fees, which have remained fixed since 1989, are the major roadblocks to the stable continuation of the paper. Consequently, the staff and their supporters are forced to undertake fund-raising activities to save the paper. It's a shame, but it would be more of a shame if we allowed a cultural icon to vanish from the scene.

As Docena rightly points out, the Philippine Collegian has played a pivotal role in the history of not only the university but of the entire nation. In the 1950s, he argues, the Collegian "galvanized our collective consciousness as students and Filipinos." In the dark days of martial law, he further points out, the paper valiantly played the role of an underground press against the dictatorship, undeterred by danger and life-threatening situations. And only recently, the Collegian again campaigned for the ouster of the corrupt Estrada presidency. In fact, in June 2000, long before the mainstream press started to put the heat on Estrada, the Collegian had already editorially called for his resignation.

The Collegian's pivotal role in national affairs, of course, predated the 1950s. I took a look at Oscar Alfonso's authoritative book, "University of the Philippines: The First 75 Years (1908-1983)," and found that it has devoted more pages to Collegian citations than any other item in the university's long and distinguished history. Alfonso, a respected professor of history, longtime administrator in various capacities at the state university and current member of the Board of Regents, noted that the Collegian had in the past been a source of irritation to the UP administration because it had never been run on a stable financial basis, relying mostly on voluntary contributions. But in 1925, the Board of Regents mandated a fee of one peso from each student every semester, which stabilized the publication of the paper. Now, 75 years later, unstable financing again has come back to haunt the Collegian. The basic problem has come back full circle.

One of the earliest contentious issues that the paper took on involved the burning national debate at the time on the Hare-Hawes Cutting Act. Arturo Tolentino, the Collegian editor, was warned by Dean Jorge Bocobo not to discuss the Hare-Hawes Cutting Act because it was a partisan issue. Tolentino appealed to university president Rafael Palma, who in turn ruled that the paper could discuss the issue, why not? Finally, the Board of Regents rejected Palma's decision invoking a 1912 ruling that "no student paper or publication shall take any stand on any partisan or religious question which may be the subject of any controversy between political parties or religious sects." Sounded like a ruling for a convent school, not a state institution.

The feisty and courageous Palma, bless his soul, steadfastly stood his ground, maintaining that there was nothing wrong with discussing politics, since "we teach political science in the university and there is no reason why we should ban our students from practicing what they study." He was right on the nose. Tolentino, who was to become a future national leader, criticized the action of the Board of Regents as an abridgement of the freedom of speech.

There's more to this story, but the upshot of it was that Palma, feeling burnt out anyway after 10 years in office, asked to resign or be retired if he was entitled to some benefits under the gratuity law. Immediately, a group of distinguished faculty, which included Dean Bocobo, asked Palma to reconsider his decision to retire. The Collegian, vigorously asserting that "the university needs Rafael Palma," also pleaded with the president to stay. The paper further took issue with the "controlling" nature of the national legislature.

The postwar years up until the declaration of martial law were even more turbulent at the "Diliman Republic." As always, the Collegian was in the eye of the storm and every controversy. President Vidal Tan suspended the paper in the stormy mid-'50s when he and his then secretary, English professor Josefina Constantino, were sued by Amelita Reysio Cruz for, among other things, secretarianism and favoritism. In the '60s, under President Romulo's dispensation, the Collegian came out swinging again over the issue of secretarianism, which, its editors argued, undermined the open and secular nature of a university, an academic community. In June 1962, Collegian editor Luis Teodoro Jr. and managing editor Ferdinand Tinio were suspended for one month by the paper's adviser for printing an entire issue without prior approval of the latter.

There have been many more incidents like this over which every UP student and product would be justifiably proud. The staff should not only be the one interested in keeping it afloat.

For this reason and more, the UP Alumni Association of Hawaii has pledged to initially raise $1,000, which falls under the "Collegian Donation" category, to help out with the beleaguered paper. The donation will be sent through proper channels. It's not improbable that we will take on the bigger "Oblation Donation" project of $5,000 at a later date.

Fund-raising is being done all over the place. Every single day, I get all kinds of bloody mail asking for money for this and that cause. But it's the only way to survive. If you are a university program these days, you can't exist anymore on your operating budget. We understand the problems of the Collegian.

At the same time, in order to attract more donors, the Collegian must work hard on a plan for managing the paper so that it doesn't incur a continuing deficit. Donors usually don't like giving to "losers." That's the name of the game. Nobody wants to bail out a losing proposition. While UP alumni are willing and able to help, there will always be someone who'll raise the issue of accountability. One of the questions I got from a UP alumna, whom I was trying to solicit for this cause, was, "How come they ran such a huge deficit—P600,000? Are you sure they're running it efficiently?" And so on and so forth. What could I say?

Coincidentally, in Hawaii, another cultural icon, the Honolulu Star-Bulletin, which has been around for the past 116 years, was threatened with extinction last year. Only a vigorous citizen crusade and a "Save the Bulletin" movement set in motion a series of actions and activities that will keep the paper alive, probably in the next 100 years.

Save the Collegian? Sure, really worth doing. I urge all UP alumni to heed the call.

A true-blue UP partisan, the author has been a student, graduate, instructor, research assistant, professor and vice president for public affairs at the state university.

Higher qualifications for the presidency

IT is time that the qualifications for the presidency are made more appropriate for that high office. The Constitution has only four qualifications for those who would aspire to be president. Nothing is said of the educational background of anyone who would be president. The qualifications are: natural born citizen, must be able to read and write, registered voter and aged 40 years and above. Should we not consider the educational attainment of the candidate?

The task and duties of the president as a representative of the people are not easy and definitely not just a role to play. How will someone govern properly if he's not knowledgeable enough? We've had a college dropout who brought the whole country to the brink of ruin. Are we going to let this blunder happen again?—**JULIE ANN CALICA, Calumbaya, Bauang, La Union**

The WORLD

MARGOT J. BATERINA, Editor

China faces changing of the guard

BEIJING—China's leaders look united. At the annual meeting of the national legislature, they pat each other on the back for the television cameras and speak with one voice.

But behind the scenes, China is on the brink of its most momentous change of leadership in a decade—at a time when the government is grappling with a daunting array of domestic and international challenges.

Next year, six of the seven members of the ruling Communist Party politburo are expected to leave their posts at the party's twice-a-decade congress. The year after that, President Jiang Zemin and other top officials are due to retire.

Backroom maneuvering has been feverish at the 11-day National People's Congress, which ends Thursday, as Jiang and other leaders try to install protégés to look after their interests. At the front of this pack of junior contenders is an unassuming, little-understood figure widely expected to become the next leader of China—Vice President Hu Jintao.

Whoever wins the leadership fight will inherit a government struggling to assert itself on nearly all fronts.

Beijing is trying to win a place in the World Trade Organization, crush the Falun Gong spiritual movement and overhaul its economy without creating an army of jobless rebels. It must end rampant corruption and raise rural living standards.

At the same time, China wants to coerce rival Taiwan into unification and preserve relations with the United States without giving up its ambitions to be East Asia's dominant power.

So concerned were top leaders that they called an extraordinary three-day meeting in February at which party and government officials, military commanders and local leaders were summoned to recommit themselves to China's latest five-year economic plan and key elements of party dogma.

One by one, top leaders stood to pledge themselves to fight Falun Gong, according to accounts by diplomats. The government regards the spiritual movement as a key threat to its power, but has been unable to stamp it out despite an often violent 19-month-old crackdown.

Participants were assured there would be no re-examination of the decision to crush the 1989 Tiananmen Square pro-democracy protests and no reversal of the official conclusion that they were a counterrevolutionary riot.

There was no sign that renewed debate sparked by the publication abroad of documents that purport to show a leadership divided by the protests spilled over to political circles. The government has denounced "The Tiananmen Papers," a book released in the United States in January and said to be based on secret government records, as a fabrication. *AP*

US Navy plane drops bomb, kills 6 in Kuwait exercise

FLAMES erupt from targets during joint live fire exercises by the US and Kuwaiti militaries at the Udairi range in Kuwait, 20 km from the Iraqi border in this Feb. 25 file photo. A Navy F/A-18 Hornet strike-fighter was practicing "close air support" for ground troops at the Udairi bombing range March 12 when it dropped a bomb that killed six personnel. AP

WASHINGTON—A US Navy warplane mistakenly dropped a bomb on military personnel during a training exercise Monday in Kuwait, killing at least six people, including four Americans and one New Zealander, Pentagon officials said.

The circumstances of the accident were unclear hours afterward. It appeared the Navy F/A-18 Hornet was practicing "close air support" for ground troops at the Udairi bombing range. Those killed and injured apparently were directing the Hornet to targets, but it was unclear what went wrong.

For hours after the accident the Pentagon made no official statement confirming the number of casualties.

Pentagon officials who discussed the matter only on condition of anonymity said initially that five people had been killed. They later raised the figure to six before saying they could not be sure which was correct.

Two of the Americans killed were from the Army and two were from the Air Force, said one official, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Brett Bartos, a consul at the New Zealand Embassy in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, said a New Zealander was killed in the accident. He refused to give any other details.

Col. Ahmed al-Rahmani of the Kuwait Defense Ministry told Kuwait TV that six people were killed and some of those injured were in critical condition. He did not elaborate.

One Pentagon official said an estimated 10 people were injured. A second official said no civilians were involved.

Pentagon spokesperson Bryan Whitman would say only that there had been a "training accident" and that there were an unspecified number of casualties.

President George W. Bush, traveling in Panama City, Florida opened a speech on his budget proposals and military spending with brief mention of the accident.

"I'm reminded today of how dangerous service can be. We lost some servicemen today in Kuwait in a training accident," Bush said. "I hope you'll join me in moment of silence for those soldiers and their families. God Bless."

The accident happened at the Udairi bombing range in Kuwait, about 48 km from the Iraqi border. One official said those killed and injured were involved in a multinational training exercise in which ground forces direct strike aircraft to specific targets. It was not clear what went wrong Monday.

An official said the Navy plane, flying from the USS Harry S. Truman aircraft carrier in the Persian Gulf, dropped what was believed to be a 225 kg gravity bomb. It was not clear whether the pilot erred or whether those on the ground directed the Hornet to the wrong area on the bombing range.

The United States military has operated regularly from airfields and an Army base in Kuwait since the 1991 Gulf War, when a US-led coalition expelled the occupying Iraqi Army from the small Arab nation. The continuing presence of US forces in Kuwait is meant as a deterrent to Iraq. *AP*

Indon MPs: Country on the brink of collapse

JAKARTA—A group of Indonesian MPs yesterday warned that the nation was on the brink of collapse and called for all major parties to work together and set up a national coalition government.

The group of 17 leading MPs, including Kwik Kian Gie, the former top economic adviser to beleaguered President Abdurrahman Wahid, said they were launching their action after 10,000 people took to Jakarta streets Monday calling on Wahid to resign.

Monday's demonstration was the latest in weeks of mounting protests against Wahid—the country's first elected president.

The group, calling itself the Caucus of Nov. 11, 2000, also urged the country's national assembly, the MPR, to meet as soon as possible.

The special MPR session is meant "to take decisions that can save the nation from the worsening slide in the life of the people and the nation, which is now on the brink of collapse," the group said in a statement read out in parliament by Kwik.

The MPR is the nation's highest legislative body which elected Wahid for a five-year term in October 1999. It is the sole institution, which has the power to withdraw his mandate.

Kwik said the group was drawing up a program to present to the legislature.

"The caucus reached the conclusion that for the life of the people and the nation to return to normal, the government needs to be backed by all powers in the political infrastructure," Kwik read.

"This means that the Cabinet should be a coalition Cabinet, which should represent all factions at the DPR or MPR. The 'National Unity Coalition Cabinet' to be formed should also agree on all strategic and fundamental areas," the statement added.

Wahid, who has spent much of his term in office on overseas visits, has increasingly come under fire to quit amid mounting unrest across the vast archipelago which has claimed thousands of lives since he came to power.

Wahid was also censured by parliament in February after it found he may have played a role in two financial scandals totaling almost $6 million.

Defense Minister Mohammad Mahfud yesterday told reporters at the state palace that Wahid would respond to the allegations soon, but gave no date.

Wahid has three months to reply to the first censure. He will have to reply to a second censure within one month.

Under the Constitution, the DPR can call a special session of the MPR if it considers the president's replies to two consecutive censure motions unsatisfactory. *AFP*

A SUPPORTER of Indonesian President Abdurrahman Wahid waves rupiah banknotes to illustrate his claim that anti-Wahid demonstrators are paid to attend protests during a pro-Wahid rally outside the presidential palace in Jakarta, March 21. REUTERS

North Korea cancels talks with S. Korea

SEOUL—In a blow to reconciliation on their divided peninsula, North Korea called off Cabinet-level talks with South Korea just hours before they were to begin yesterday.

North Korean chief delegate Jon Kum Jin did not give a reason for the cancellation of the talks in Seoul, but South Korean analysts speculated that the Pyongyang government was concerned by tougher talk from the new US administration.

South Korean President Kim Dae-jung returned Sunday from Washington, where President George W. Bush told him that he was skeptical of North Korea and would not immediately resume negotiations on the North's missile program.

"North Korea may have delayed the meeting because it has not yet set its stance on how to cope with last week's Kim-Bush summit," said Koh Yu-hwan, a professor of North Korea studies at Seoul's Dongguk University.

Bush said he supports Kim's policy of engaging the North, but South Korean officials worry privately that a hardline US approach would slow the reconciliation process with the North that began last year.

In recent weeks, North Korea has angrily threatened to pull out of missile and nuclear accords with Washington.

"Considering various circumstances, we cannot participate in today's meeting," the South Korean government quoted Jon as saying in a telephone message relayed to his South Korean counterpart, Unification Minister Park Jae-kyu. Jon did not offer to reschedule the talks.

Park expressed strong regret and urged that the meeting be held as soon as possible, his ministry said in a statement. At the talks, South Korea had planned to set an agenda for exchanges for the rest of 2001, including more reunions of separated family members.

South Korean officials did not speculate on why North Korea scuttled the meeting.

Kim Sung-han, a North Korea expert at state-funded Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, said the abrupt cancellation may have been an "indirect protest" against the Bush-Kim summit. *AP*

KREMLIN ENCOUNTER REUTERS

Iranian President Mohammed Khatami (left) meets his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin in the Kremlin, March 12. Putin said that Moscow would proceed with arms sales to Iran but supplies would be solely to ensure Tehran's defense needs.

Japan opposition renews attacks vs prime minister

TOKYO—Hoping to build unity and improve a badly battered image, Japan's ruling Liberal Democrats held their annual convention yesterday as opposition groups submitted a censure motion against scandal-prone Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori.

The three-hour party convention, which began late yesterday afternoon, comes amid widespread speculation that Mori, one of Japan's most unpopular leaders in decades, will resign soon.

In a keynote speech, Mori was expected to indicate his openness to holding elections for a new party president—a post he concurrently holds with that of prime minister—before the vote now scheduled for September, when his term expires.

If Mori backs an early vote, the elections could be held as early as next month.

But Mori and other ruling party chiefs have been coy about the prime minister's intentions, sticking to their public position that he will stay on at least until after summits this month with Russian President Vladimir Putin and US President George W. Bush.

Mori has said he also wants to see the budget for the current fiscal year through Parliament. Its passage is expected before the end of the month.

Opposition leaders grilled Mori in Parliament on Monday, saying confusion over whether he intends to step down has created a political vacuum. They also accused him of keeping the nation in the dark in favor of back-room wheeling and dealing among party officials.

On Tuesday, they continued their onslaught with a censure motion calling for Mori's immediate resignation, said Kazuhiko Akiba, an official with the Democratic Party, the largest opposition group.

Akiba said the censure was filed because Mori has lost people's trust. The motion, which is not binding, was to be put to a vote in Wednesday's upper house plenary session.

It had virtually no chance of passing, as the Liberal Democrats and their two ruling coalition partners have agreed to reject it.

Japan's media continued on Tuesday their calls for Mori to quit. *AP*

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10 senators fired for poll cheating

BANGKOK—In a landmark order, the Election Commission yesterday expelled 10 senators including the Senate president from the House after finding them guilty of cheating to win elections last year.

The ruling, which cannot be appealed, is another blow to the credibility of the upper house of parliament, some of whose other members are embroiled in sex and bribery scandals. It also is a vindication of Thailand's ongoing political reforms under which the Election Commission was set up to root out endemic poll fraud.

The four-member Election Commission set by-elections for April 21 to fill the 10 seats.

Election Commissioner Yuwarat Kamolvej told reporters that there was "sold evidence" that the election victory of the 10 members was "not free and fair."

"After 15 hours of deliberations the Election Commission has unanimously decided to dismiss the 10 senators because it has grounds to believe that their election involved fraud," he said. *AP*

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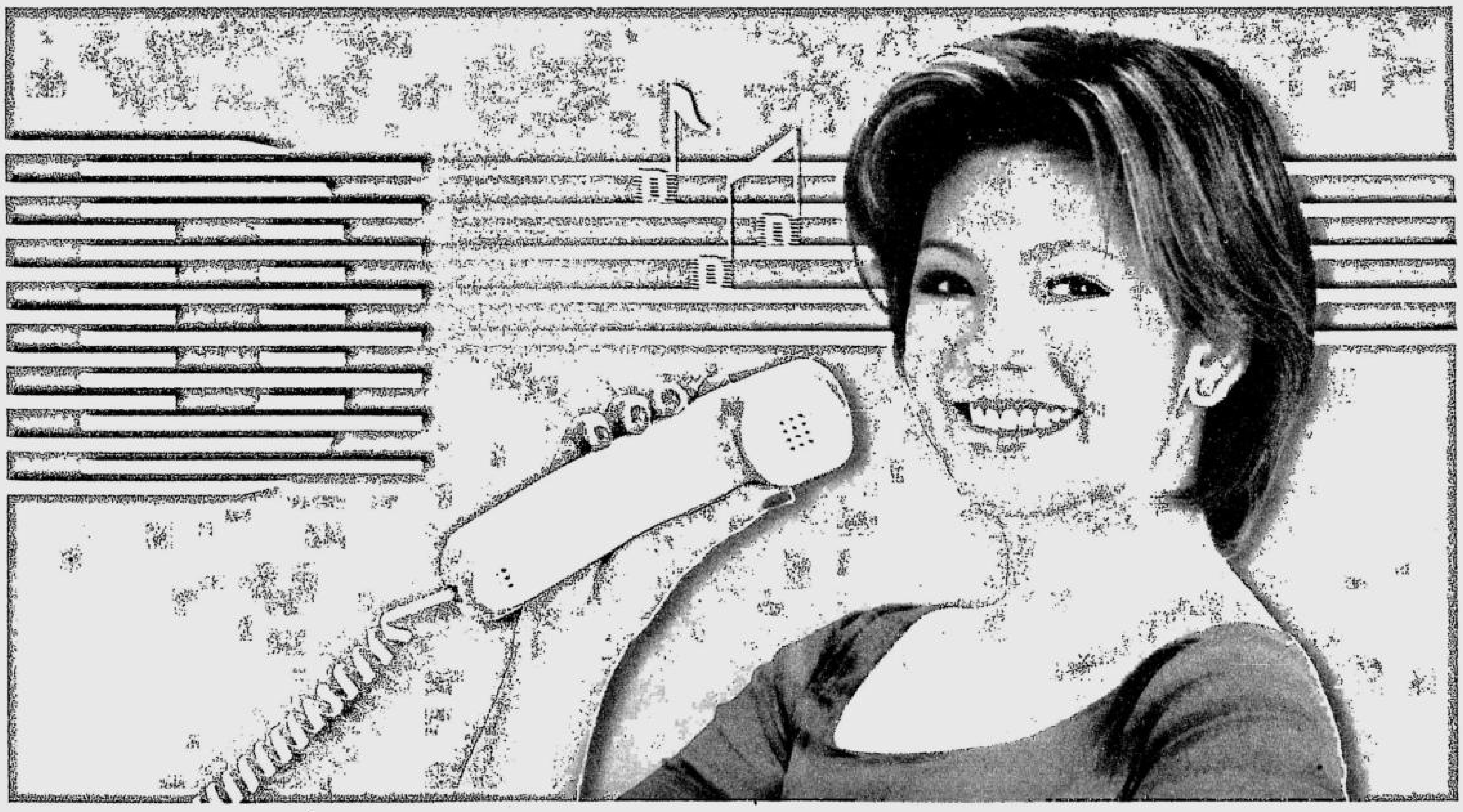

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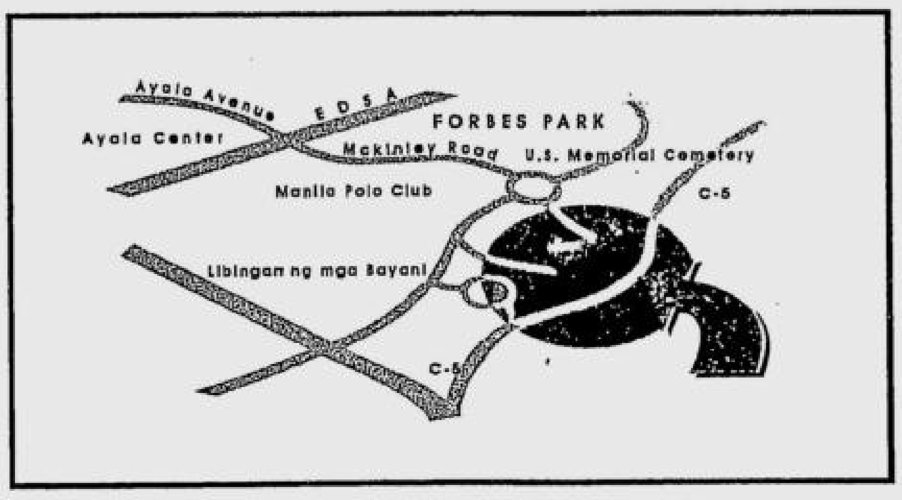
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MEXICO CITY—After a triumphant arrival in Mexico City, the Zapatista rebel entourage pitched camp at local universities and turned to lobbying legislators for passage of a major Indian rights law Monday.

Members of a congressional commission met with the 24 rebel leaders late Monday to discuss details of the bill, which was written to enact a 1996 agreement between the government and the Zapatista National Liberation Army.

After the meeting, lawmakers announced the two sides had agreed on six points, the majority of which covered the logistics of initiating a "respectful, frank and cordial" dialogue. The commission also said rebel leaders agreed to a second meeting, but did not say when that would be.

Sen. Carlos Rojas told the government news agency Notimex that Zapatista rebel leader Subcomandante Marcos seemed to sincerely want to restart talks to end the Chiapas conflict.

The Zapatistas, however, made no comment after the meeting, and only lawmakers had signed the news release.

A combination political rally and academic seminar featuring Mexican and European writers and academics, the event followed the tumultuous welcome the rebels received upon their arrival in Mexico City's main square Sunday after a two-week bus tour though southern Mexico.

The Indian Rights and Culture Bill had been stalled in Congress since it was drafted by legislators shortly after the agreement reached with the rebels in the Chiapas state town of San Andres Larrainzar.

The rebels quickly endorsed the proposal, but former President Ernesto Zedillo balked, claiming it went beyond the agreement and had loose wording that could endanger Mexico's sovereignty and unity.

Claiming the government had reneged on its agreement, the Zapatistas walked out of peace talks. The Indian rights pact was to be the first of six areas of discussion ahead of a formal peace treaty. *AP*

FMD crisis enters its 4th week

LONDON—Tempers are fraying in Britain as the country's foot-and-mouth outbreak enters its fourth week with no end in sight.

After a two-day spike of 34 new cases saw the total number of infected areas in Britain and Northern Ireland rise to 183, The Times newspaper reported yesterday that police have begun confiscating shotguns from dismayed farmers allegedly on the brink of suicide.

"Don't worry. It's under control," The Independent yesterday said in a sarcasm-laced, front-page headline highlighting the increasingly hollow ring of government assurances.

Sheep farmers, angered by warnings that 500,000 pregnant ewes may face slaughter, argued bitterly with police on one television news program Monday night; another station had a camera crew nearly bowled over by farm hands during a live broadcast.

In a bid to address the countryside's souring spirits, Prime Minister Tony Blair launched a series of talks yesterday with farmers and other rural residents hit hard by the livestock ailment.

"I know it's very frustrating at the moment because we simply don't know how foot-and-mouth is going to develop to its fullest extent," Blair said Monday as he announced his tour.

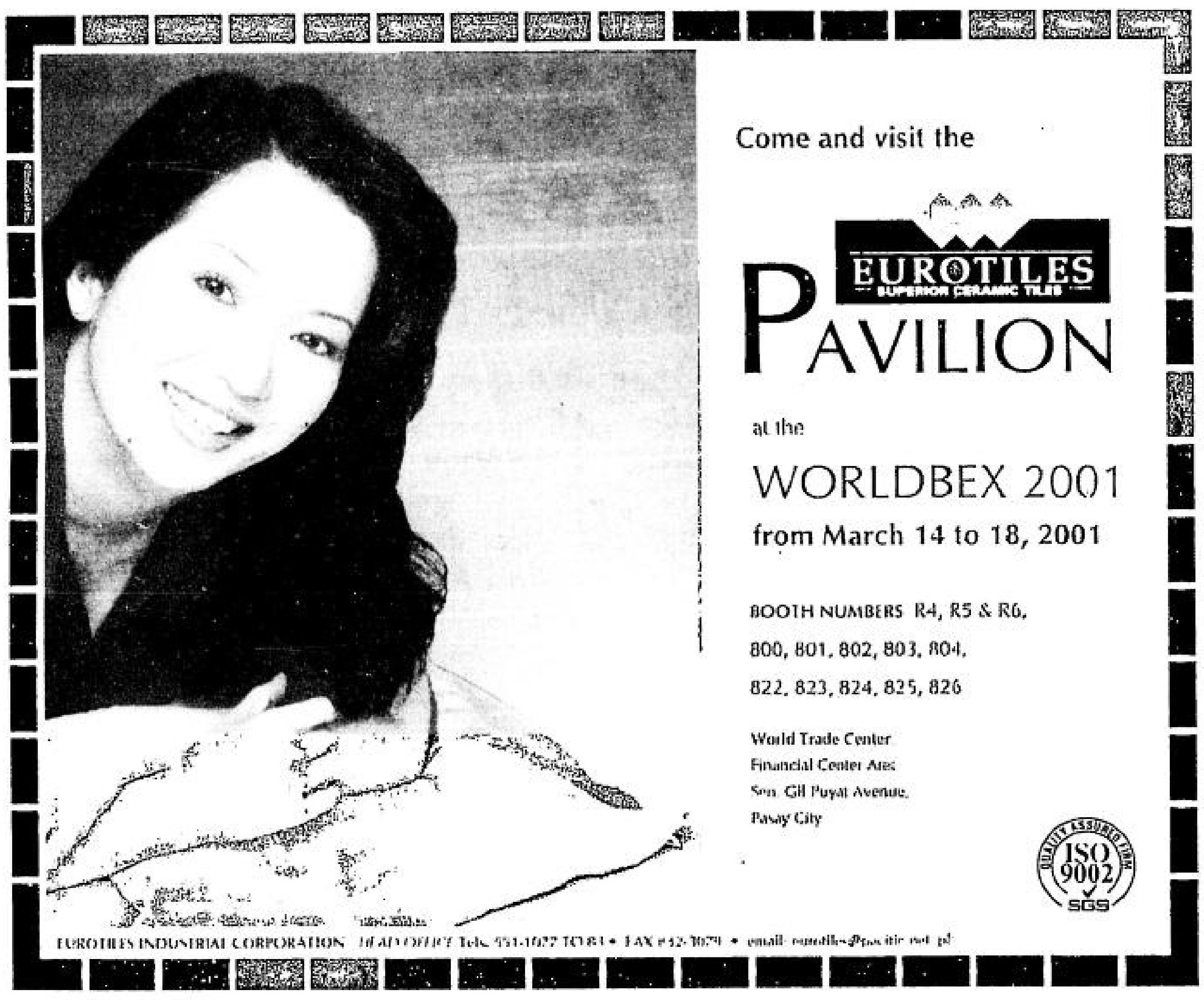
Meanwhile, the specter of the disease's spread to continental Europe was raised once again Monday by a new batch of suspected infections in France.

Veterinary officials have "strong suspicions" that foot-and-mouth disease was detected in six cows in the village of La Baroche-Gondouin. The entire herd of 107 cows was to be culled overnight and the six suspected animals tested yesterday.

If confirmed, it would be the first case outside the United Kingdom.

Irish officials have emerged as the most vocal foreign critics of Britain's handling of the outbreak. The Republic of Ireland has sacrificed St. Patrick's Day parades, tourism revenue and nearly all sporting events in a bid to keep out the disease, and is pressuring Britain to tighten its own restrictions.

Britain halted dairy, meat and livestock exports shortly after the first case of foot-and-mouth was confirmed on Feb. 19. More than 150,000 livestock have been destroyed or earmarked for slaughter. *AP*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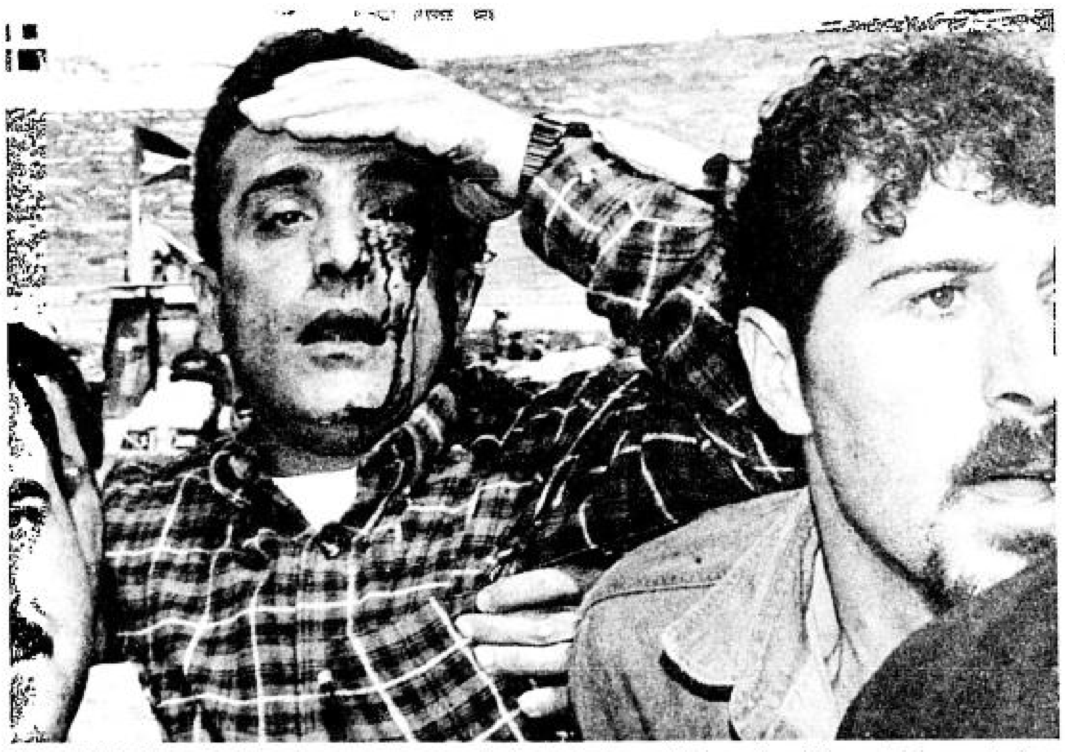

AN INJURED Palestinian is carried away during clashes with Israeli soldiers which erupted as Palestinian demonstrators attempted to remove a roadblock at a Ramallah main road, March 12.
REUTERS

Sharon defends West Bank blockade as Palestinian protests turn to violence

JERUSALEM—Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon defended Monday the tightening of a much criticized noose around the West Bank city of Ramallah, as a Palestinian protest against the closure deteriorated into deadly violence.

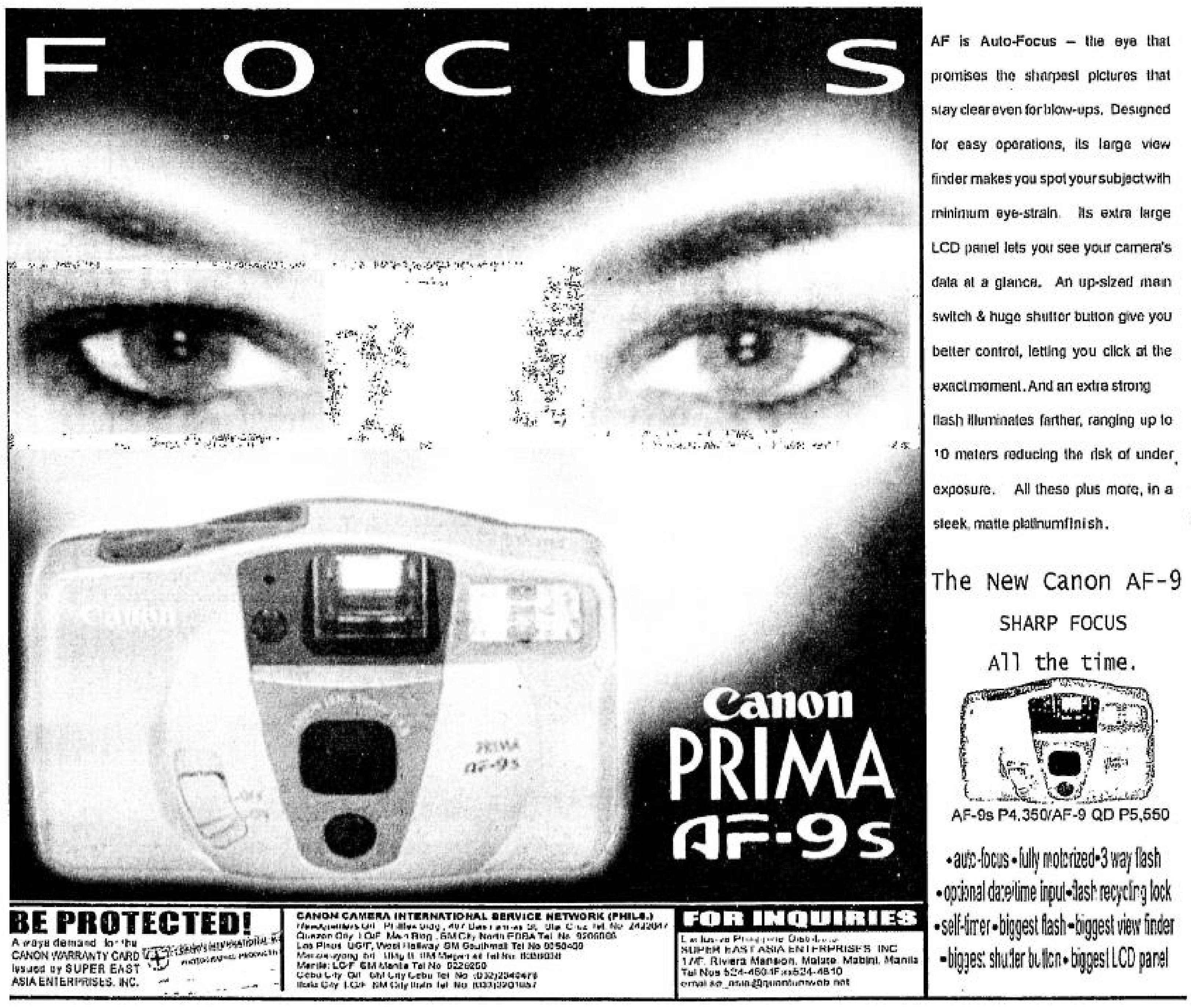
The hardline Sharon, facing a split in his days-old "national unity" government over the action, outlined a plan to confront the cycle of Israeli-Palestinian violence at his first Cabinet meeting.

But Labor ministers went on the offensive over the Ramallah blockade, the first measure Sharon has taken against the Palestinians since assuming office last week on a pledge to restore security in the face of more than five months of unrest.

A member of the Palestinian military intelligence was killed, apparently by a sniper's bullet, and another 15 people were injured by rubber bullets when Israeli troops fired on Palestinians demonstrating near Ramallah against the closure, hospital officials said.

"This is Sharon's war against the Palestinian people," charged Palestinian information minister Yasser Abed Rabbo who joined the rally.

"It is a racist war by the occupation but we will fight against it because we have nothing to lose and our freedom to gain," he said, calling for Arab states to cut ties with Israel and for the deployment of an international force to protect the Palestinians. *AFP*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Judge orders Pinochet freed from detention

SANTIAGO—A Chilean judge Monday ordered the conditional release from house arrest of former dictator Augusto Pinochet, 85, saying he posed no danger to society while awaiting trial on charges he was an accessory to the murder and kidnapping of some 75 political foes in 1973.

Judge Juan Guzman ordered Pinochet freed on bail of $3,400, though no request had been made by Pinochet's lawyers, saying the former dictator's release would not affect the case against him and because he posed no danger.

Lawyer Gustavo Collao, who represents Chile's former military ruler, said his client will comply with Guzman's decision.

The release order however does not take effect until it is approved by the Santiago Appeals Court, which has the power to overturn it.

Prosecutors announced they would immediately appeal the judge's decision.

Pinochet has been under house arrest since late January at Los Boldos, his country residence near Bucalemu, some 120 km southwest of the capital, while awaiting trial.

Guzman had originally charged Pinochet as the mastermind of the killings and disappearances, which occurred in the weeks following the bloody September 1973 coup that brought him to power, but the Santiago Appeals Court last week reduced the charges to accessory. *AFP*

Bt-corn to be tested in 29 villages

By Dennis A. Maliwanag
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

LOS BAÑOS, Laguna—Despite Malacañang's declaration against the field testing of genetically modified organisms (GMO), giant agrochemical firm Monsanto-Philippines plans to test Bt-corn in 29 barangays of the country.

This time, Monsanto will not use precautions to prevent the possible contamination of local corn varieties, Elenita Daño of the Network Opposed to Genetically Modified Organisms (NO-GMO), said here.

"The extent and coverage of the field trials are very alarming," Daño said, adding that Monsanto has applied for 32 test sites with the government's biosafety regulatory body.

Daño said detasseling, a precaution Monsanto took during its first field trial in General Santos City last year, would not be done this time, raising fears of genetic pollution from the cross-pollinated Bt-crop.

Detasseling leaves corn plants practically sterile.

"What makes it even worse is the information that the field trials will be conducted in open fields involving much bigger areas of more than 1,000 square meters for each site," said Daño, who also heads the South East Asia Regional Institute for Community Education.

Agricultural scientists said corn sheds its pollen for seven hours daily, except when the temperature reaches 32 degrees Celsius.

Long-distance pollen travel can occur on a windy day.

Most of the multilocational test sites are in the corn-growing areas of Luzon and Mindanao.

In mid-February, President Macapagal-Arroyo issued a policy statement declaring that the "Philippines will not be initiating or pushing for this (GMO open field) experimentation."

But advocates of biotechnology maintain that the gene-altered corn will boost farmers' income through increased yields and reduced use of chemicals, claims that are still being debated upon by scientists.

Critics say safety queries would not be addressed by the experiments as they will simply look into the efficacy of the Bt-corn plant against borer.

"The danger points raised by scientists and civil society groups could already be happening even with simple field testing," said Dr. Pamela Fernandez, head of the Agronomy Department's Seed and Science and Technology Division at the University of the Philippines in Los Baños. Corn roots, reaching as deep as 2.5 meters in the subsoil, could cause adverse effects on the soil ecology, agricultural researchers said.

About 600,000 small farming families depend on corn production in the country.

The 18 proposed test sites are in Ilocos Norte, Pangasinan, Isabela and Camarines Sur in Luzon. In Mindanao, 14 sites are planned in Bukidnon and South Cotabato.

"It is really insulting how the NCBP (National Committee on Biosafety of the Philippines) and the regulatory agencies involved have manipulated us by hiding the real status of these applications and violating the public's right to information in the process," said Daño.

"We have repeatedly requested the NCBP for information on applications for field trials that they have received so far," she said, "we were not informed at all about these applications."

The NCBP is the country's highest regulatory body with regard to the introduction, use and transfer of genetically modified organisms and potentially harmful exotic species (PHES) in the Philippines.

Bt-corn contains gene from soil bacterium *Bacillus thuringiensis*, a toxin that makes this transgenic crop produce its own insecticide to beat corn borer.

Accord ends Subic protest

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT—This time, it's really over, according to a leader of the protest action staged by employees of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority and its manpower subsidiary, Freeport Services Corp. (FCC).

After almost eight hours of negotiations, protest leaders and the management of the SBMA and the FSC signed on Monday night amendments to the March 9 amicable settlement initially rejected by the workers.

The workers opposed two provisions of the settlement as "contrary to law and the rights guaranteed them by the Constitution."

The amended agreement was signed before midnight Monday by SBMA Chair Felicito Payumo, FSC officer in charge Sergio Cruz, the 12 representatives of the protesting workers, regional director Juanito Mejia, conciliator Rodolfo Guevarra of the National Conciliation and Mediation Board, regional director Anicia Marasigan-de Lima and Zambales director Irene Babas of the Civil Service Commission.

On Tuesday morning, the workers vacated and cleaned up the area they had occupied at the foot of Magsaysay Bridge across the main freeport gate. They are expected to return to work today.

As provided for in the agreement, the SBMA and FSC will not take any legal or administrative action against the workers.

The protest action, which began Feb. 21, provided the workers an opportunity to organize the SBMA/FSC chapter of the Mamamayan ng Olongapo Laban sa Abuso sa Volunteers at Empleyado (Molave). The chapter was formally established on Saturday.

The group headed by Edwin Piano, former chief of the SBMA Employee Welfare Division, assisted the workers in organizing the protest.

"We are thinking of having our chapter registered but nothing is final yet," John Tabares, FSC security officer and a protest leader, said.

It is not clear if the new workers' organization can be registered with both the Department of Labor and Employment and the CSC since the SBMA is a government entity. Government workers are allowed to organize employees associations, which should be registered with the CSC.

Nonetheless, the workers' organization is a first in the history of the SBMA and FSC.

Tabares confirmed that the 12-member negotiating committee that met Monday with SBMA and FSC officials were the interim officers elected Saturday by members of the newly organized chapter. Tabares was elected chair. ***Elizabeth Marcelo, PDI Central Luzon Desk***

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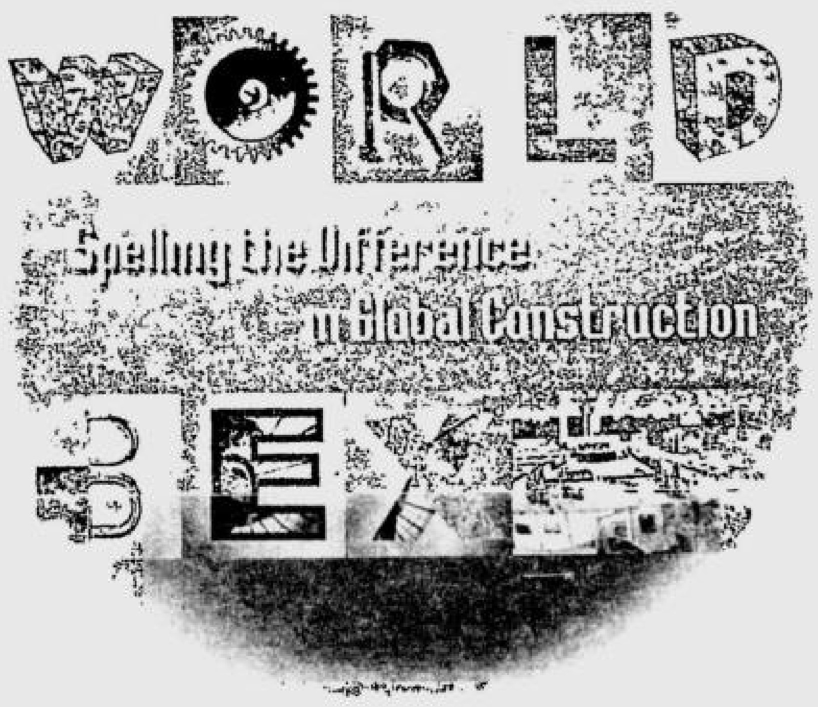
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Product Demonstration SCHEDULE

DATE	TIME	COMPANY
14 March	1:00 to 2:00	WG&A - Freight & Passage Information
	2:00 to 3:00	Blue Circle - Masonry Cement
	3:00 to 4:00	SMJ Furnishing (S) Pte. Ltd.
	4:00 to 5:00	Audio-Visual Driver-Audio Access: Multi-Room Pipe-In Music
15 March	10:00 to 11:00	Delta Faucet - The Cutting Edge in Faucet Technology
	11:00 to 12:00	Intelligent Traffic System-Cleaning,Rejuvination,Protection & Maintenance of Natural Stones
	1:00 to 2:00	OFS - USM Products
	2:00 to 3:00	Blue Circle - Phoenix Fly Ash Cement
	3:00 to 4:00	Wordtext Systems, Inc. - HP Vectra
	4:00 to 5.00	Elco Philippines, Inc. - Home Building System
16 March	10:00 to 11:00	OFS - USM Products
	1:00 to 2:00	Audio-Visual Driver - Portable Presentations
	2:00 to 3:00	Hocheng Philippines - HCG Product Presentation
	3:00 to 4:00	Wordtext Systems, Inc. - HP Plotters
	4:00 to 5:00	Stoneworks-The Stoneworks Technology of Cast Polymer Products
17 March	10:00 to 11:00	Habitat for Humanity Phils. - The Heart of Habitat
	1:00 to 2.00	Coleman Asia - Powermate Generators and Air Compressors
	2:00 to 3:00	Taytan International - Magnetizer Hard Water Conditioner
	3:00 to 4:00	Clear Defense Phils., Inc.
	4:00 to 5:00	Infratex - Dual Wall PE Drainage Pipes & Fitting
18 March	11:00 to 12:00	Taytan International - Magnetizer Hard Water Conditioner
	1:00 to 2.00	Dutchboy -The Wonders of Dutchboy Multicolor Paint
	2:00 to 3:00	Stoneworks -The Stoneworks Technology of Cast Polymer Products
	3:00 to 4.00	SMJ Furnishings (S) Pte Ltd

Show HOURS

14 March 2001 - 10:00 am to 6:00 pm	*for trade visitors*
15 March 2001 - 10:00 am to 8:00 pm	*for trade visitors*
16 March 2001 - 10:00 am to 8:00 pm	*for trade visitors*
17 March 2001 - 10:00 am to 8:00 pm	*for general public & students*
18 March 2001 - 10:00 am to 6:00 pm	*for general public & students*

Children below 10 years old are not allowed inside the exhibit hall

Program of ACTIVITIES

14 March 2001	10:00 AM WTCMM	Opening Ceremonies
14 March 2001	6:30 PM Baluarte de San Diego Intramuros, Manila	Filipiniana Night (by invitation only).
15-16 March 2001	8:00 AM to 5:30 PM Century Park Hotel	*3rd Worldbex Seminars 2001
14 March 2001 15-18 March 2001	1:00 PM to 5:00 PM 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM Stage Area WTCMM	Product Demonstrations

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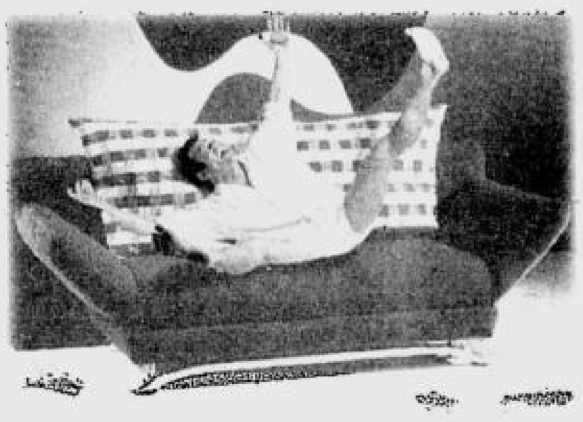

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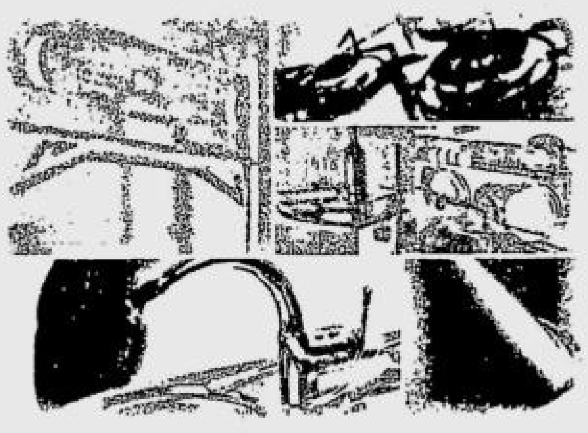

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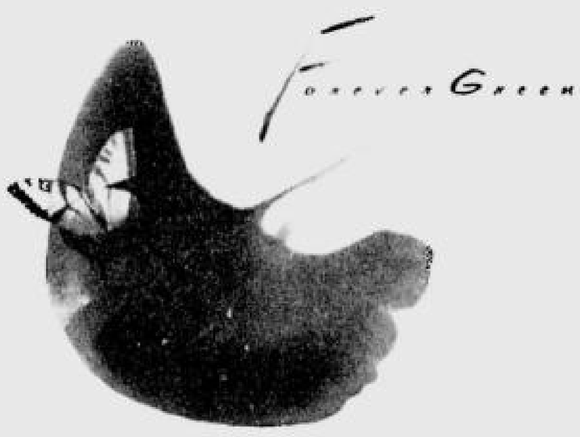

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NPA attack prompts warning by RPA chief

By Carla P. Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—Tension is growing between two rival rebel factions in Negros following a clash of their armed guerillas in Candoni town on Friday that left three persons dead and another wounded.

Carapali Lualhati, Revolutionary Proletarian Army-Alex Bongcayao Brigade (RPA-ABB) chief, warned that his group would launch an offensive against the New People's Army (NPA) if the latter continued to encroach on RPA-ABB areas on the island.

He ordered the RPA-ABB regional command in Negros Island to be on "defensive modes" in their territories following Friday's clash in Barangay Gatuslao, Candoni town, 130 kilometers southwest of this city.

An RPA-ABB member and two civilians were killed when the NPA rebels fired at the house of Leo Buenaventura Landero where the RPA-ABB rebels were having dinner.

Killed were Landero, his daughter Jinky, and an unidentified RPA-ABB guerrilla. Jinky's brother Antonio and two RPA-ABB rebels were wounded.

Military and police investigators said the killing might have been triggered by a territorial dispute between the two rebel factions.

Military officials identified Virgilio Parangan, alias Ka Hassan, as the one who led the NPA rebels in shooting at Landero's house.

Maj. Jon Aying, 61st Army Infantry Battalion commander, said Parangan and his men had engaged in a verbal tussle through a two-way communication radio with RPA-ABB guerrillas led by Rogelio Magbato and a certain Ka Brando, shortly before the incident.

Aying described Ka Hassan as a former commander of the RPA-ABB command in southern Negros who was subjected to "disciplinary action" by his superiors shortly before he defected to the NPA.

Lualhati said Ka Hassan left after he was punished for using the name of the RPA-ABB in alleged extortion activities in southern Negros.

Magbato, an RPA-ABB field commander in southern Negros, was a follower of Ka Hassan when the latter was still with the breakaway faction.

But Lualhati said what happened in Candoni was a "massacre."

He said the RPA-ABB guerrillas who were inside Landero's house chose to flee instead of firing back at the NPA rebels because there were civilians with them.

Barangay residents led by their chair, Demetrio Katipunan, urged the two rebel factions to spare them from the conflict.

Dureza says ARMM vote on May 14 not likely

COTABATO CITY—Despite an assurance given by the Commission on Elections that a plebiscite on the proposed expansion of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao would be held simultaneously with the May 14 national and local polls, a Malacañang official said this was unlikely to happen.

Jesus Dureza, presidential assistant for regional concerns, on Saturday noted a remote possibility that the plebiscite on expanding the areas of the ARMM would be held on May 14 after President Macapagal-Arroyo decided not to sign a bill amending the Organic Act.

Dureza said this was his interpretation of the President's statement. "I allowed it to lapse into law," he said when asked by a reporter about the unsigned bill that Congress submitted to the President on Feb. 28.

"Under the Constitution, if the President does not sign, veto or act on a bill after 30 days from receipt thereof, it becomes a law. And following that provision, by March 27, the bill shall become a law," Dureza said.

It also provided that a plebiscite shall be held 60 days after the effectivity of the law itself, he said, adding that if this were the case, 60 days from March 27 would be May 25.

"Therefore, holding the new plebiscite on May 14 would be 48 days short of the required period of 60 days," he said.

The law further said that the plebiscite should not be held earlier than 60 days but not more than 90 days, Dureza said.

Using the maximum requirement of 90 days from March 27, it will end up in June, "the probable month for the holding of the plebiscite," he explained.

"I foresee that the plebiscite will be held not later than June 28," he added.

Dureza said a plebiscite scheduled in June and the ARMM election in September would just be right and proper for a political exercise that is very important for the peace and economic stability of Mindanao.

Despite Dureza's opinion, Comelec Commissioner Luzviminda Tancangco said the poll body had already prepared four million more ballots and other election paraphernalia for the holding of the plebiscite on May 14. *Charlie C Señase, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Suspect in kidnapping of bank exec charged

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—Police authorities here have filed charges of kidnapping with robbery, car theft and illegal possession of explosives and ammunitions against one of the seven suspects in the March 3 kidnapping of a bank manager and his daughter.

The suspect, Abdul Rahim Daud, 40, of Lambayong in Sultan Kudarat, was captured by the police a day after the incident.

The lawmen were informed by residents of Barangay Tinagacan that they saw a suspicious-looking person without slippers and wearing filthy clothes in Purok Tamborong.

Daud has been in police custody for about a week but the police have kept his presence from local media for fear that a premature disclosure would jeopardize rescue operations.

Consumers Bank manager Lowell Sinda and his 20-year-old daughter Janice were snatched by seven armed men around 8:20 p.m. in Gensanville Subdivision in Barangay Bula here.

Lowell was abandoned by the kidnappers inside a Honda Civic car at a grassy portion in Bulaong Terminal in their haste to elude pursuing policemen and soldiers.

Sinda's daughter has remained in the hands of her captors.

The bank manager positively identified Daud as one of those responsible for their abduction.

Sinda said the kidnappers took valuables, including P3,500 cash, jewelry items and a 9-mm pistol, before taking him and his daughter at gunpoint.

He said Daud drove the Kawasaki motorcycle used as a getaway vehicle in abducting Janice. The vehicle was later found abandoned along the highway in Barangay Katangawan after ramming through a police roadblock.

Col. Pedrito Magsino, newly assumed commander of the 601st Army Brigade, expressed optimism that Janice will be released this week.

He said negotiations between the abductors and the Sinda family for the safe and immediate release of Janice had been going on.

Magsino refused to give more details. *Aquiles Z. Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

10 drug dependents escape from center

MALINAO, Albay—At least 10 of the 26 drug patients at the Bicol Regional Drug Rehabilitation Center in Barangay Comun here escaped Saturday night.

Five were recaptured in Iriga City in Camarines Sur, four hours after the incident.

The patients escaped by destroying the concrete wall in the left wing of Dormitory No. 2. The wall did not have steel bar reinforcements, an employee of the rehabilitation center told the INQUIRER.

A physician-surgeon, who was admitted a month ago, allegedly led the breakout. The patients used blankets to climb up the high concrete fence mounted with cyclone wires.

All wards were padlocked, it was learned.

The employee said the surgeon, who allegedly led the escaping patients, was brought to the center by his parents for shabu (metamphethamine hydrochloride) addiction. The surgeon, 35, used to practice his profession in Naga City.

Other patients of the center are reportedly scions of prominent people in Bicol. Two of them are sons of town mayors in Catanduanes.

Insp. Dennis Vargas, center administrative officer, said the escape was discovered around 8 p.m.

The patients reportedly hired tricycles in going to Tabaco town and transferred to a bus bound for Manila, he said.

He said the patients did not have money because they were not allowed to keep any as a policy of the center.

"They used their shirts, pants and other personal belongings as payment to the tricycle drivers instead of cash," Vargas said.

Vargas said the patients were from Pilar and Donsol towns in Sorsogon, Polangui in Albay, Iriga City and Catanduanes.

Dr. Eutiquio Vibal, the center's director, was not available for comment as he was in Manila on official business. *Job B. Belen, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

DORMITORY ROW

19 UPLB studes suspended

LOS BAÑOS, Laguna–Nineteen student leaders of the University of the Philippines at Los Baños (UPLB) have been suspended following campus protests over dormitory issues.

The office of the University Student Council (USC) was also padlocked.

The suspension order, the USC office closure and the refusal of UPLB Chancellor Wilfredo David to hold a dialogue with the protesters smacked of events reminiscent of martial law, according to USC chair Symone Donacao, who was among those suspended.

"There is no longer any student council existing in this university today. The chancellor has practically robbed students of their basic right to protect themselves. This is the first time this has happened since martial law," Donacao complained.

On March 8, UPLB student affairs director Candida Adalla put under "preventive suspension" those who participated, supported or barricaded the administration building from March 6 to 9, which disrupted UPLB office operations.

Among those suspended were Donacao and eight other student council members, Jeffrey Ian Dy, Simonette Lim and Virgilio Catoy.

Adalla defended her order, saying her list of those who were punished was based on "consistency of presence in the barricade," except for the entire USC, which was suspended.

Adalla said she issued the order because the administration building was closed down and operations were paralyzed.

"I'm (supposed) to protect the students' interest but when issues like these arise, I need to respond," the UPLB Perspective quoted Adalla as saying.

The students erected the barricade to dramatize their opposition to a plan to convert the Men's Residence Hall into an all-freshman dormitory. They said David had refused to hold a dialogue with them.

The student leader said she was disgusted by the behavior of the chancellor. "He is supposed to be a father to us students. When I pleaded to him for a dialogue, he cursed me and said everything's finished and there is nothing more to discuss," the USC chair narrated to the INQUIRER.

Administration officials denied the allegations by the students.

In its March 12-16 special issue of the UPLB Horizon, the administrators said it was not true that the chancellor did not want to have a dialogue.

In fact, the chancellor had a dialogue with two representatives of the Men's Residence Hall and the head of the MRH Association on March 5, the Horizon said.

David refused to speak to the INQUIRER when it tried to reach him by phone on March 10 and 11. *Romulo O. Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

ROUNDUP

PNP waistline policy

NAGA CITY—The 34-inch waistline policy for all policemen that former Philippine National Police chief Panfilo Lacson ordered must be retained, Deputy Director General Leandro Mendoza announced Friday. Mendoza said his office would measure policemen's waistlines again next month. But he said changes would be made in the physical fitness guidelines. The policy had led to the deaths of two policemen in Bicol. *Juan Escandor Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Car burglars

COTABATO CITY—Police authorities admitted having a hard time solving at least 27 cases of car thefts reported since Jan. 1, with the burglars striking even at day time and taking away car stereos and other valuables. The latest victim is Jose Flaminiano, branch manager of College Assurance Plan here, whose jeep's stereo, speakers and other personal items were taken. The vehicle was parked some 600 meters from a police station. *Edwin O. Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Amok attacks bet

NAGA CITY—A man ran amuck and hacked a candidate for a seat in the town council on Sunday for still unknown reasons, police said. Police identified the victim as retired Supt. Benjamin Facistol, who was attacked with a bolo by a certain Jesus Facistol Infante. Police said Infante, a first cousin of the victim, caught up with the victim in the latter's house. PO2 Ariel Chozas, who fired a warning shot with an M-16 rifle, was attacked by Infante instead, prompting him to shoot Infante several times. Infante died on the spot while Facistol was still in coma at the Naga City Hospital as of press time. *Juan Escandor Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

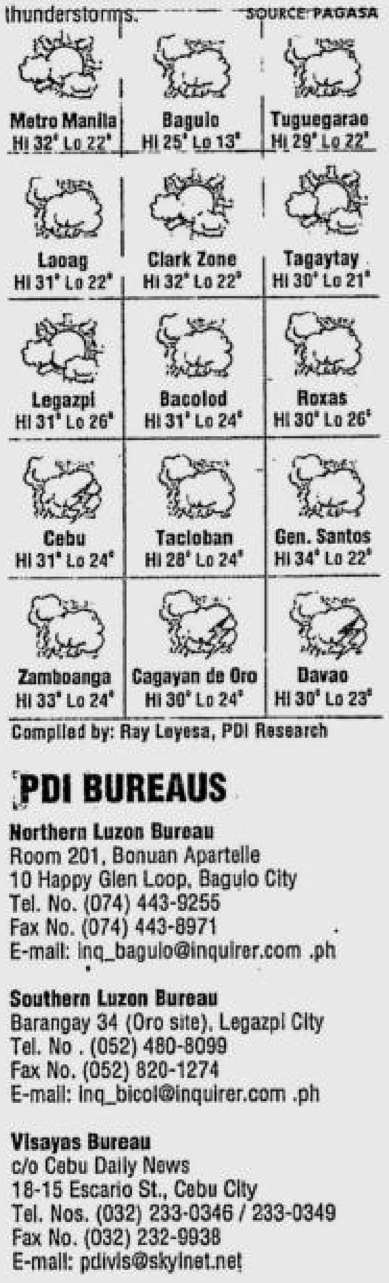
Davide vows reforms

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. has vowed to put in place judicial reforms before his term ends in 2005. During a gathering of court personnel from Northern Mindanao, Caraga and Central Mindanao here for the Supreme Court Centenary Celebration, Davide said the reforms included development of an efficient system in the judiciary and adoption of legal and judicial ethics. He cited the need for "internal and external transformation to achieve reforms in the judiciary." *Ellen Red, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Visayas and Mindanao including Palawan will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and isolated thunderstorms. Meanwhile, Northern Luzon will be mostly cloudy with rainshowers while the rest of Luzon will have partly cloudy to at times cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA



Compiled by: Ray Leyesa, PDI Research

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Suspects in hazing visit dead cadet

BY VINCENT CABREZA AND TOOTS SOBERANO
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

FORT DEL PILAR, Baguio City—Under heavy security, the four suspects in the fatal hazing of Philippine Military Academy Cadet Edward Domingo were escorted to his coffin Monday night during a necrological service organized by the PMA Corps of Cadets here.

Maj. Gen. Manuel Carranza Jr., PMA superintendent, ordered the suspects to join the services along with the rest of the academy "to reinforce the PMA's very strict anti-hazing policies."

Two of the suspects—Third Class Cadets John Louie Ong and Michael Perang—were positively identified by witnesses as the ones who dealt Domingo fatal blows, said Senior Supt. Villamor Bumanglag, Baguio police director.

Bumanglag, a member of PMA Class 1979, said police investigators had managed to pin down the circumstances of the death from Domingo's classmates who were ordered to "observe" the affair.

Domingo had just passed all his courses after having been turned back for a year. His beating was supposedly "good-natured" because it was being "hosted" by his former classmates of PMA Class 2003.

But Domingo died after receiving repeated blows to the solar plexus below the body's rib cage.

Ong, Perang, and fellow cadets Willard Aperocho and Omar Julius Labajo were escorted to the St. Ignatius Chapel here by military police around 9:30 p.m. Monday, sending most of the cadets into muted attention.

Emotionless, except for a slight shiver or two, the suspects were led directly to the center of the chapel where Domingo's remains lie.

Domingo's mother Leonida was quickly invited to the rectory to avoid a confrontation.

HAZING suspects (from left) Third Class Cadets Omar Julius Labajo, Michael Perang (partly hidden), Willard Aperocho and John Louie Ong pay their respects to Cadet Fourth Class Edward Domingo during the necrological services at the St. Ignatius Church at the Philippine Military Academy in Baguio City. TOOTS SOBERANO

Most of the cadets avoided the suspects, an abject stance signifying rebuke and condemnation, said a PMA official.

Carranza explained the suspects' presence to the INQUIRER.

"These (cadets) are here to share in our grief," he said.

Before that, Carranza briefly discussed his human rights policies before the cadet corps, reiterating the PMA's convictions against hazing or maltreatment.

Domingo's remains were taken to his hometown in Camiling, Tarlac, about 4 a.m. Tuesday morning.

The academy's anti-hazing policy started growing during the administration of retired Maj. Gen. Victor Mayo in 1997, although countless new cases of hazing followed after.

The first hazing case documented by the PMA occurred in 1935. A more recent one involved Cadet Fourth Class Jose Gomarcho early this year.

Carranza said Domingo's death should be seen as a symbol for change, saying the object lesson of his murder can be the momentum for altering military violence within the academy.

Bumanglag said his own class was involved in another hazing incident in 1979.

"This is an unfortunate tradition, but it is a tradition. I was once a victim. I broke a lot of small bones in my foot. Hazing is a difficult part of (training) in the PMA," he told the INQUIRER in Filipino on Tuesday.

Bumanglag said the alumni have already acknowledged that the cycle of hazing continued because of the system's policy of allowing senior cadets to handle and supervise the training of junior cadets.

Called the "Fourth Class System," the principle makes senior cadets accountable for the success or failure of their junior cadets.

Hazing had been a "weeding mechanism" for bad cadets, he said. "It is used by abusive cadets who want power, but it is usually used to punish a misdemeanor."

"Remove that chain of command (the fourth class system) and maybe we break the cycle of hazing. I was trained in other countries and I saw that their soldiers' and police training no longer put the senior cadets in charge of their junior cadets. Their administrators do their own weeding out," he said.

But the recent hazing case was still odd, he said.

The beating of Domingo was made as a "congratulatory gesture" and not as "punishment for something the cadet did wrong," Bumanglag said.

He said more witnesses have since surfaced to shed light on the incident.

New cadets bear brunt of hazing

FORT DEL PILAR, Baguio City—The incoming batch of Philippine Military Academy cadets may bear the brunt of the death by hazing of Cadet Fourth Class Edward Domingo.

Maj. Gen. Manuel Carranza Jr., PMA superintendent, said the number of applicants for Class 2005 would be significantly reduced because many of them failed in the neuro-psychiatric exams which showed that they have abnormal violent tendencies.

Carranza said the usual number of incoming plebes or freshmen cadets is about 290, but he decided to reduce the number to only 160.

However, Carranza clarified to reporters here on Monday that the decision to strictly screen new cadets and limit their number was arrived at even before Domingo's death on Saturday.

Domingo, 23, of Camiling, Tarlac, died of cardio-respiratory arrest due to blows in the solar plexus area below the rib cage. He was pronounced dead on arrival at the PMA Station Hospital here before midnight Saturday.

Carranza said about 12,000 applicants took the PMA entrance examinations last year, and only more than 1,000 passed the first stage.

The PMA has drawn 102 successful examinees from the initial 1,000. But Carranza said the figure would yet increase because of the number of "turned-back" cadets (those with deficiencies and forced to repeat the school year) and those with pending applications due to minor physical deficiencies like dental problems.

He said the academy was very particular about the results of the neuro-psychiatric exam of an incoming cadet and excluded those with "suicidal, abnormal tendencies."

Carranza immediately ordered the arrest of four "yearlings" (third class or second year cadets) staying in the room where Domingo was hazed and died.

PMA officials said Domingo's suspected attackers—Third Class Cadets John Louie Ong, Michael Perang, Willard Aperocho and Omar Julius Labajo—tried to revive him when he collapsed and later brought him to the hospital.

They are now in the PMA stockade pending the filing of homicide charges by the Philippine National Police to whom Carranza entrusted the case.

Ten witnesses, mostly classmates of Domingo, who were also brought to Room 322 of the Alpha Company Barracks, were questioned by the Baguio City police.

Carranza said he allowed the PNP to take over the case to ensure that no whitewash will occur.

This is the third time that a cadet died because of hazing.

Carranza said it was very unfortunate that it happened during his term because he is widely regarded as a human rights advocate and a strict enemy of hazing and maltreatment.

He lamented that Domingo's death came as the PMA was on its "strictest mode."

"*Walang naghahangad na mangyari ito* (No one wants this to happen). I call it *nasalisihan*," he said.

He said a review of the neuro-psychiatric profile of the four suspects showed that one of them, Perang, was earlier involved in a hazing case.

Perang's guilt, however, was not proven.

Carranza said the academy would depend heavily on the neuro-psychiatric test results to prevent hazing cases.

He said the tests were lifted from United States standards and may just be inappropriate to the Philippine setting in some cases.

"Sad to say, we have not developed neuro-psychiatric tests which are really applicable to us. They are based on US standards. I call on our psychologists to create neuro-psychiatric exams attuned to the Filipino culture," he said.

Carranza also clarified that PMA applicants who used to belong to fraternities would not be immediately disqualified.

"It would be unfair to exclude them on the basis of their membership to fraternities. We have to respect their rights," he said.

Carranza blamed society as a whole for the hazing cases in the PMA.

"Those who enter here reflect the kind of society we have," he said. "We may be teaching them human rights for four years, but we don't know what they had learned during the 17 or 21 years before they entered the PMA."

"Maybe their stubbornness is also inherent in them," he added. ***Frank Cimatu with a report from Robert Abaño, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***

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CLARK GARBAGE PLAN

Aetas: Not in our backyard, please

BY TONETTE OREJAS
Tarlac

DESPITE its "heavenly" name, Kalangitan, a resettlement site in Barangay Cutcut II in Capas, Tarlac, is no place of bliss for the Aetas.

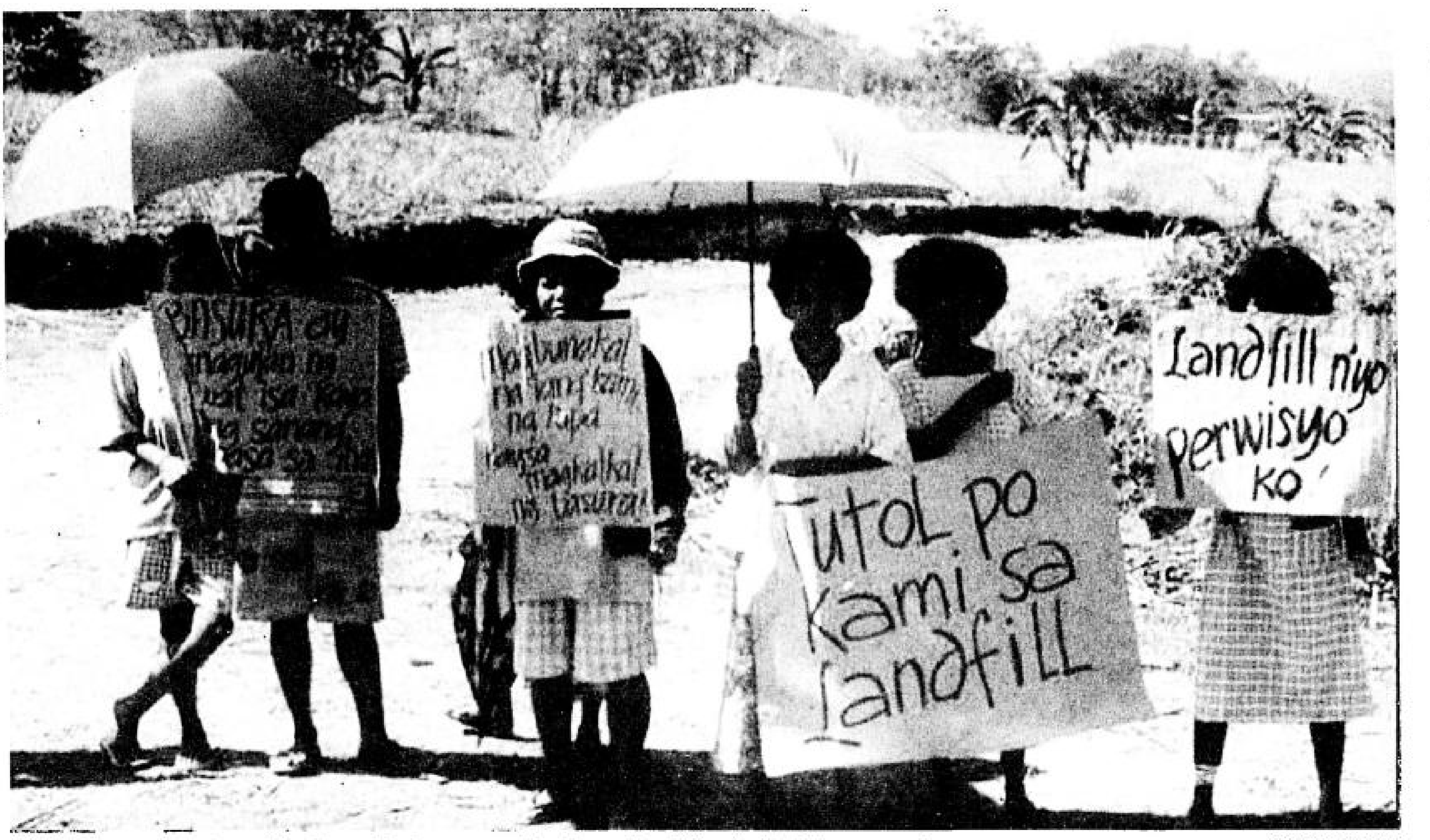
To Michael Velasco, an Aeta, who chairs the Holy Spirit Tribal Mission, Kalangitan and other ancestral domains in Capas and Bamban towns have been the settings of century-old agrarian injustices.

Starting at the turn of the 20th century, the United States government established the Clark Air Base for its 13th Air Force, occupying around 23,000 hectares of upland areas in the towns and restricting the economic activities of the indigenous tribe there.

To date, the Aetas and upland farmers have not managed to claim ownership of the former base areas even though these have been reverted to the Philippine government following the closure of Clark in 1991.

The government continued to reserve the large tracts of land at Clark and its sub-zone, where Kalangitan is, for industries, tourism projects and export-oriented agricultural ventures.

Since January this year, Velasco, the tribal people and the Holy Spirit nuns working with them have seen another injustice unfolding. This time, it concerns their environment.



AETAS in Barangay Cutcut II in Capas, Tarlac, oppose the planned landfill project in their community. TONETTE OREJAS

A CONVOY of seven vehicles breezed through a newly paved five-kilometer earth road on March 1. As soon as the vehicles stopped and their passengers alighted to scan the site of Clark's sanitary landfill in Barangay Cutcut II, Michael Velasco signaled 50 members of his tribe to get down the hill and confront the visitors.

Like the rest of the women and children, Helen Tarrusja, 22, greeted them with protest posters.

"*Ayaw namin sa* landfill (We don't want the landfill)," one poster screamed. "*Lupa, hindi basura* (Land, not garbage)," said another.

Farmer Leonardo Tañedo, 61, expressed his opposition differently. He held a bolo in his right hand, warning that he will whack it if he hears the visitors say he is a squatter.

The thatch-roofed hut at the center of the proposed 100-hectare landfill within the government land is his, he said.

"I have been sweating it out here for the last 25 years because there's nothing to till in the lowland areas," Tañedo said in Kapampangan.

But the 20 or so visitors, who are members of the technical committee of the Regional Development Council's Task Force on Solid Waste Management, did not come to hear Velasco's group yet.

They came mainly to validate the technical aspects of the 25-year landfill project, according to Oscar Marcelo, chief of the Philippine Information Agency in Central Luzon.

"We will schedule those later. We will surely hear them out," he said.

Sensing the tension, Nina Saplala and Jesus David, RDC private sector representatives, approached the Aetas, explaining the purpose of the visit and the plan to hold community consultations later.

But the Aetas and the upland farmers did not let the opportunity to listen and be heard pass off. They stood from a distance, listening to Red Fuentes, chief of the environmental management division of Clark Development Corp., rattle off technical terms on Clark's Integrated Waste Management Project.

Holger Holst, president of BN Consultants Philippines representing the German Consortium Ingenieurburo Birkhahn+Nolte GMBH and Heers & Brockstedt GMBH & Co. KG—the partner of CDC in the joint venture—joined Fuentes in explaining the viability of the site.

They also explained the project's safety to public health and the environment.

"They are talking in English. I cannot understand what they are talking about," Tañedo said.

While the Aetas were not confrontational, Diana Figueroa of the church-based Task Force No to Landfill asked Fuentes squarely: "Is it true that you said in one forum that the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority paid P80 million in advance to dump Metro Manila's garbage in this site?"

Fuentes denied having said such. He told the task force that Malacañang, in the midst of the garbage crisis in January, had indeed pressured but failed to convince top CDC officials from approving Kalangitan as an alternative dump for trash generated in the country's capital.

The groups of Velasco and Figueroa convinced the task force members to inspect three creeks draining through the landfill site.

"In the road that you passed, you did not see the creeks that are important to the residents here," Figueroa said, suspecting attempts by Fuentes and Holst to deceive the task force.

No social acceptability

Velasco said it was not the technical viability of the $6.720-million project that was the issue now or in the future. In fact, all talk as to whether the soil is made of clay or where the wind blows in the area does not make any sense to them because outright, they do not want the project to proceed.

The real issue, according to Velasco, was that the residents were "never consulted" before CDC, under then president Rufo Colayco, and BN agreed on the joint venture project in October 1999.

The Office of the Government Corporate Counsel and the CDC board also approved the project based on the need of the zone and its locators for a landfill. The base and, later, he economic zone had none and relied on the Angeles City dump.

The Metro Clark Advisory Council, which is composed of mayors of towns and cities in Pampanga and Tarlac, were likewise consulted.

Asked why the information and decision-making remained at the levels of policy and decision-makers early on in the project, Colayco then told the INQUIRER that the community consultations were actually scheduled during the processing of the project's environmental impact assessment.

Colayco's reply indicated that communities, for such an environmentally critical project, came into the picture only in the middle and not before the project is conceived or prepared.

Sr. Joy Mary Climaco, who has worked with Tarlac Aetas for the last seven years, said she only learned about the project when, "by divine chance," she met one of the project consultants in a non-landfill-related workshop early last year.

The residents were not the only ones in the dark. Even the local media were.

The INQUIRER first broke the story in late 1999 only after a CDC insider, out of concern for the Aetas, raised alert.

The project did not pass through the RDC as CDC, although coordinating with government agencies, exercises autonomy on projects implemented within the zone.

An employee of the CDC public affairs and information services office confirmed that the office began producing information materials and held community consultations only when residents and church leaders in Tarlac began resisting the project.

While the CDC-BN joint venture claimed that an "extensive information campaign is being undertaken," Climaco said the consultations have been selective, meaning CDC reached out to those who support the project like village officials.

The absence of prior consultations and the resistance of the residents to the project have been the basis of an appeal to President Macapagal-Arroyo to revoke the environment clearance certificate (ECC) that then Environment Secretary Antonio Cerilles granted on Jan. 11.

Climaco and Figueroa said the Kalangitan ECC was among the "midnight deals" that Cerilles allegedly signed before People Power II ousted President Joseph Estrada on Jan. 20.

Social acceptability, in the policy guideline of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, is a major requirement in the issuance of an ECC, according to Angeline Quiñones, senior research specialist of the Department of Science and Technology.

The international environment group Greenpeace has observed this trend of ignoring the communities.

"Often, dumps and landfills are located in communities that are most vulnerable, economically and politically, to resist them," it said.

"In the local experience, these are rural areas that are often 'traded off' to gain political mileage in the politically active and vote-rich urban areas."

To CDC's assertion that the site is within a government area, the residents, in a petition to Ms Macapagal, said:

"The jurisdictional authority of CDC over the zone is not a blanket authority that can ignore the rights of those residing there and those within the vicinity which are already outside the zone but are still to be affected by the proposed project."

Division

The project has divided the residents and strained even relationships within clans and families, according to Climaco.

CDC, she claimed, has put on the payroll village officials who get P5,000 monthly, including motorcycles, cellular phones and construction scraps from the zone.

These same officials, she added, have been threatening the residents, offering them only two choices that boil down to either submission or reluctance.

"The choices they offer are down to two. It *is 'pera o patay* (money or death)' and not yes or no to landfill on the basis of short-term or long-term effects on health, livelihood and environment," she said.

The village officials have also promised employment, houses and P30,000 to families who will be displaced.

"But what jobs await the Aetas? Because they haven't attained high education, the options are limited to scavenging," Climaco noted.

Puroy, the village chieftain, denied getting money or favors from CDC.

Local politicians did not help either in ending the division and calming the residents. The provincial and municipal councils, obviously in an electioneering mood, opposed the project after the ECC was and when Estrada became extremely unpopular.

Source of life

Like other farmers, Tañedo grows corn on the site. Like many Aetas, Mercedes Umali depends on the creeks of Malalam, Kalangitan and Kuayan for fish, farm irrigation and drinking water, especially during dry months.

Fuentes said the landfill site is not a prohibited or declared watershed area. Neither is there an official claim or application for a claim of ancestral domain.

"Must there be an official claim when our forefathers have lived in the area for centuries? Must the site be a declared watershed when it is obvious that where there are rivers and creeks and mountains and forests there are Aetas?" Velasco asked.

"We haven't been asked how we regard and use our environment. We depend on the land. It's our only means for survival," Umali said.

"We find it unkind and unfair that wastes produced in the industrial zones and urban centers will be brought in our midst," Velasco said. "Those are not our wastes. Why can't they manage their own waste in their own backyards?"

Bonsai as art, therapy and source of income

HOW can you raise in your living room an 80-year-old *molave* tree? Orlando Soriano knows how—through the art and science of bonsai.

"Bonsai culture is not only a hobby for me. It's an art," said Soriano, 44, who loves to see bonsai trees and other plants even in his family's living room.

A teacher of the Natividad Oriental Academy in Pangasinan and the owner of two farm supply stores, Soriano is also a member of the Pangasinan Bonsai Society.

He won first prize for his bonsai *molave* tree in the recent bonsai competition at Camp John Hay, which was part of the yearly Panagbenga Flower Festival. He brought home a P4,000 check and a plaque.

The Pangasinan Bonsai Society also cornered the second and third prizes, besting other entries, some of which came from the Bonsai Society of the Philippines in Manila.

Soriano's barely two-foot high tree growing from four-inch thick earth contained in a one-and-a-half-foot by three-foot semi-rectangular concrete pot is believed to be 80 years old.

The entry is actually a naturally dwarfed tree Soriano and a team hunted from the wilds of Pangasinan two years ago. Soriano pruned some branches and roots and designed the tree through wirings.

Before the prize results were announced on Feb. 25, a buyer was supposed to take Soriano's bonsai tree for P28,000. Soriano decided to keep his tree after it won first prize.

"The tree is so dear to me that I am reluctant to part with it," said Soriano, who also loves raising orchids in his backyard.

Therapy

Raising dwarf trees is not only an art and obsession. It is a therapy for drug addicts, too, according to Mike Morden, a farm supply entrepreneur and president of the Pangasinan Bonsai Society.

Morden said at least 12 people had given up their addiction and were fully rehabilitated when they joined the bonsai society.

What's so magical about bonsai culture that even addicts can kick their deadly habit?

BONSAI entries from the Pangasinan Bonsai Society. MAURICE MALANES

"Maybe it's that inner satisfaction that every bonsai lover experiences in growing and designing a tree," said Morden, whose bonsai entry at Camp John Hay won second prize.

This entrepreneur from Villasis, Pangasinan, says raising bonsai trees is not only an art, but a science as well.

"Why? Because one has to know about plants, forests and ecosystems," he said. "One has to know about horticulture (the science and art of growing fruits, vegetables, flowers and ornamental plants) and forestry."

Rules

There are two kinds of potential bonsai material. One is taken from the wild, and the other from seedlings one raises in his or her backyard or farm.

Some trees become bonsai because of natural causes, such as acidic soil and a certain climatic condition. Members of the Pangasinan Bonsai Society often schedule "hunting expeditions" for these natural bonsai trees.

To avoid hitches or even protests from community folk, the group, according to Morden, has set some rules and procedures for members to follow.

One is seeking the consent of the community and local officials, and replacing with at least 15 tree seedlings every bonsai material taken from a community.

Tree species, which are good bonsai materials and which one can propagate through a seedling nursery, include *kamuning*, *balite*, *bantigue* and *bignay*. For upland regions like Baguio City and the Cordillera, it is possible to grow bonsai pine trees, says Morden.

For some members of the Pangasinan Bonsai Society, bonsai culture has become their rice and fish, so to speak. Of the more than 60 members of the group, at least 20 are full-time in the industry. These workers get their income from their seedling nurseries, manufacturing bonsai cement pots, and from bonsai fertilizers they sell.

And if the group's bonsai trees are computed in peso terms, the 60 members, each of whom has an average of 50 bonsai trees worth a minimum of P2,000 each have a collective asset of P6 million, says Morden.

Bonsai, politics

The members of the society come from various professions, economic status and varied political leanings.

"Some of our members are political rivals, but they can agree on one common ground—the art of bonsai," said Morden, a former Villasis mayor.

Members of the society meet from time to time to share and discuss techniques, lessons learned from mistakes and other new information on bonsai taken elsewhere.

Although united on bonsai, each member seeks to maintain individuality. On how to improve his bonsai art, Soriano, for example, says he listens to suggestions from other members of his family.

"But as a master of my own art, I create my own bonsai design," he said, suggesting that he can help God make, if not design, a tree. ***Maurice Malanes***

'You have policemen with you, I know the major who's with you'

(From page A1)

sity of the Philippines College Baguio, was abducted together with his friend, Tihani Tingal, 26, in Baguio City on Thursday night.

Tingal, a native of Pangasinan, was a UP Baguio speech communication graduate and was in Baguio reportedly to get her diploma. She was applying to be a flight stewardess at the Philippine Airlines, a school employee said.

Tingal's body was discovered around 6:30 a.m. Sunday in San Simon, Pampanga.

Gian's father, Charles Leung, said his wife was already in Tarlac on her way to the designated drop-off point for the ransom when she was told on her cell phone by one of the abductors that the deal was off. Lota Leung was acting as negotiator for the kidnap victims.

"She was on her way to give the money but was told to go back as members of the PAOCTF (Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force) were with her," Mr. Leung said.

He, however, stressed that the family was not blaming the PAOCTF.

"I'm not blaming anybody here because we saw that everybody was doing his job," he added.

In an interview with radio station dzBB yesterday, PAOCTF head Chief Supt. Hermogenes Ebdane said that based on his own inquiry on how his men handled the situation, "there were no lapses on the part of our personnel."

He refused to give more details about the case saying, "we can't reveal everything that transpired."

Recollection

Based on the recollection of the Leungs, Gian failed to come home to their Baguio house as expected on Thursday night.

(The family later learned that the car used by Gian and Tingal was last seen at 2:30 a.m. Friday in front of a Baguio City establishment. The witness, however, could not determine how many people were in the car at the time, or what they were doing, because the car was tinted.)

Ms Leung attempted to reach Gian, the youngest in the brood, through his cellular phone. Finally, at 7 p.m. on Friday, the phone was answered. But not by her son.

The voice on the other end of the line told her that they had kidnapped Gian.

Negotiations then started with the kidnap gang asking for one million pesos. The negotiations dragged on for some time as the family had to look for the money.

Twenty-four hours later, the gang agreed on a much lower ransom (news reports later said the final amount agreed upon was P250,000) and told Gian's mother to deliver the money in a designated place in another province.

Police authorities, who had been alerted earlier, gave the go signal for the drop with the assurance that it would be monitored.

Ms Leung left Baguio at around 10 p.m. Saturday and proceeded to the drop-off point with a relative.

Kidnappers call

Suddenly, the kidnappers suddenly called her on her cell phone and told her that the deal was off because the authorities had been informed by the family.

"I vehemently denied it. He (one of the kidnappers) accused me of breaking our agreement . . . He accused me of having the PAOCTF follow me around . . . He even said that he was following me," Ms Leung said.

Asked if she noticed the PAOCTF following her, she said she never noticed them.

"I didn't see them but they were supposedly trailing us," she said.

Hours later, Gian's body was found in a burned out cogon field in Barangay Laug, Mexico, Pampanga.

According to Gian's father, his son was almost naked when his body was recovered.

"He only had briefs on . . . Autopsy revealed that he had no torture marks. He died from a single gunshot wound (in the nape)," Mr. Leung said.

Gian was supposed to turn 23 this Saturday. The family has decided to bury him on his birthday.

The car that the abducted couple were using, a maroon 1995 Toyota Corolla GLXi with Plate No. UBS 583, has not yet been recovered.

Hunt

President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday ordered law enforcers to hunt down "ruthless kidnappers" responsible for the kidnapping and killing of Leung and Tingal.

The killings were "utterly senseless and despicable," Ms Macapagal told her weekly news conference. She vowed that the authorities would not rest "until justice is served."

"One kidnapping with murder is one kidnapping with murder too many. This is a commitment of our administration. This is also our crusade," Ms Macapagal said.

DENNIS SABANGAN

INQUIRER employee Dennis Leung arranges the photos on the casket of his younger brother Giancarlo at the Mt. Carmel Church in Quezon City.

She assured the victims' families and the public that "the authorities will go after these ruthless kidnappers, they will be hunted, they can run but they cannot hide forever."

"I will not stop until justice is served and I am ordering our law enforcement agencies to intensify their campaign to bring the perpetrators to justice," she said.

Ms Macapagal acknowledged that Leung and Tingal were the first casualties of kidnap gangs in her administration.

The President lamented that the kidnapping happened when the National Security Council had reported a drop in kidnapping incidents—from 4.9 percent in the first two months of last year to 4.5 percent during her administration. There were 39 kidnap cases reported from January to February last year.

"But even if we say that the crime rate has dropped during our administration, this should not be a reason for us to be happy about," Ms Macapagal said. "Until there are still kidnapping incidents, our fight against kidnapping is not completely over."

Session Road Band

Among the first persons to rush to Mangaldan, Pangasinan, to attend the wake of Tingal were the members of the Session Road Band.

Lead vocalist Hanna Romawac said Tingal's death was a "heavy blow" to them because they were used to her presence in practically all their gigs within and outside Metro Manila.

Romawac's elder sister, Tarla, said Tingal had actively helped the group in its various activities "out of friendship."

Romawac recalled that when the band composed an upbeat song, "I'm Leaving You," Tingal laughed and gamely told her: "That's my song. It's really meant for me. That's the story of my life."

"It all started as a joke. She used to tell me that the song was made for her because it's about moving on. She was mending a broken heart then and so she could easily relate to it," Romawac said.

Weng Dalao, Tingal's best friend in UP Baguio, said she would miss the times they shared together.

"We borrowed each other's toothbrush and we did not care about it. In fact, we just laughed about it," said Dalao, who took a leave from her work in Manila to attend her friend's wake in Pangasinan.

She called Tingal a "very jolly person who loved to hang out and drink with friends."

Tingal was supposed to attend a party with her friends when she and Gian were abducted.

Beta Sigma

Gian headed the Beta Sigma Fraternity's UP Baguio chapter and was also the lead vocalist of Buffy Band that used to play at Perk Café.

He was planning to take up law after graduating this April.

His best friend and fraternity brother, John Della, said the last time he talked to Leung was on Wednesday last week when they discussed their plans to study law.

"We were only together 10 days ago, and I was so excited for him because he would graduate this semester. I knew how he worked hard on his thesis and how serious he was on graduating this semester," Della said.

Leung had shifted courses three times. He first took up BS Physics-Math in his first year, Social Science in his second year and Mass Communication in his fourth year.

Della said Leung became more serious in his studies when he pursued journalism.

"Whenever he had homework, he would do it right away," he said. *With reports from Armand N. Nocum; Gobleth Moulic and Desiree Caluza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Chicken soup for Pinoy soul

(From page A1)

time may e-mail Hansen at www.chickensoup.com or write to P.O. Box 7655, Newport Beach, CA 92658.

Stories should not be more than 1,200 words. Those that will be chosen will be published in "Chicken Soup for the Filipino Soul" and the authors will be paid $300.

"We can help your country reinvent your story. We want you to be more happy than you are. You can make a bigger difference and impact in the world," Hansen, who is a professional speaker, said.

When Canfield and Hansen wrote "Chicken Soup for the Soul," they didn't guess how much readers would like their book.

After 11 years, they have published 38 books and produced more than 100 audio, video and CD-ROM titles of the "Chicken Soup for the Soul" series. These are distributed worldwide in 39 languages.

Tomorrow, Hansen will hold two seminars at the Makati Shangri-La Hotel. From 9 a.m. to noon, he will talk on "Living Your Dreams: A Healthy Helping of Chicken Soup for the Soul." These are firsthand accounts of the triumph of the human spirit. The session will be packed with innovative ideas, timeless principles, easy-to-use techniques, entertaining stories and stories about Hansen's personal experiences.

From to 2 to 5 p.m., Hansen will speak on "How to Think Bigger...Bigger Than You Ever Thought You Could," the winning life strategies he has learned from some of the world's greatest success stories. The program aims to help participants triumph during rough times as well as good times, realize their intellectual and creative potentials and take charge of their lives.

Today, Hansen will sign his books at 5 p.m. at Powerbooks on Pasay Road, Makati and at 7 p.m. at National Bookstore Quad, Makati.

Companies and individuals interested in joining the sessions should call TeamAsia at 564-0908; 807-6370; and 842-3289; fax 546-0914 and 842-3308; or e-mail cvmanuel@teamasia.com.ph.

The seminars will be hosted by TeamAsia and sponsored by Campbell's Soup, the Philippine Daily Inquirer, ABS-CBN News Channel, 103.5 K-Lite, Magic 89.9 WTM, CityLite 88.3, 99.5 RT and Imagination Inc.

In the last 20 years, Hansen has made more than 4,000 presentations to more than 2 million people in 32 countries. His presentations cover sales excellence and strategies, personal empowerment and development and tripling one's income and doubling one's time off.

In today's world where irreverence is fashionable and cynicism passes for maturity, people say it's uplifting to find writers such as Hansen create bestsellers about the simple things in life.

"It's time to prosper and go to heights beyond which you've never gone before. And what I've got are the keys to the four main principles: figure out what you want, put it in writing , visualize if you can have it and get together a team so you can achieve your goals," he said.

A prolific writer, teacher and raconteur, Hansen has written "The Aladdin Factor," "Dare to Win," "Visualizing is Realizing," "Mastering the Mastermind Principles," "Living Your Dreams," "The Miracle of Tithing," "Future Diary," "Mind Power Anthology" and "The Power of Focus." Hansen first visited the Philippines in 1996 to handle a workshop with 3,500 participants.

He said "Chicken Soup for the Veteran's Soul," "Chicken Soup for the Diver's Soul" and "Chicken Soup for the Jewish Soul" will be out in the market soon.

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What Do
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Palace using 'pork' for list-up–Sonny O

(From page A1)

tee chair, Sen. John Osmeña, yesterday said.

Congress will hold a special session on March 19-21 to pass the special registration law, according to Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr.

Pimentel said President Macapagal-Arroyo had promised to release P200 million for the special registration.

Legalizing the holding of a special registration for youth voters with only 60 days before the May 14 elections may only take a few stroke of a pen, but the Commission on Elections (Comelec) insists that the process will be "operationally impossible" to undertake.

Comelec Chair Alfredo Benipayo even warned that the proposed special registration before April 2 would seriously compromise the integrity of the voters' list and consequently that of the May 14 elections.

"Holding special registrations now will inescapably exert a negative influence on both the orderliness and credibility of the coming elections," Benipayo said at an assembly of the Philippine Constitutional Association at the Hotel Inter-Continental in Makati City.

In a press conference, Osmeña said, "The committee on finance has been reliably informed that P17.5 million in CDF (Countrywide Development Fund, popularly called the pork barrel) is going to be released to each congressman who attends the special session on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday next week."

The opposition senator said the administration was setting the stage for the use of 4.5 million "flying voters" to favor the People Power Coalition (PPC) candidates.

But Malacañang denied that it was releasing pork barrel to legislators.

"We don't have to resort to that," presidential spokesperson Renato Corona said.

He dismissed Osmeña's allegation as "just an opposition politician's talk."

Ms Macapagal said there was no "hidden agenda" in the government's bid to call for the special registration.

"There are those who suspect that politicians have a hidden agenda in pressing for the holding of a special election," she said in Filipino.

"We will not allow those with hidden agenda to have their way," she said.

Ms Macapagal said that some politicians were riding on the issue for their own "political or special interests."

The real issue is the possibility that millions of new voters will lose their chance to vote for "true leaders" into office, according to the President.

Pimentel had expressed optimism the Senate could muster a quorum but doubted whether the House could get enough members to hold a session.

Sen. Blas Ople has urged Senate and the House leaders to arrest their members who refuse to attend the special session.

Osmeña said the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) would draw a total of P3.85 billion in CDF from the P31.8 billion allocated for public works projects in the 1999 and 2000 budgets.

"As a matter of fact, the DBM has already sent out notices to the congressmen asking them to prepare their list of projects. It's P17.5 million per congressman," Osmeña added.

Soft projects

Osmeña said that out of the P17.5 million, P10 million would be released directly to the agency handling infrastructure projects identified by the legislator.

He said a congressman would be given the discretion to spend P7.5 million on "soft projects" such as livelihood and financial assistance to their constituents.

Osmeña claimed that there was no pork barrel for the senators.

He said it was not true that more than 4 million voters had not been unable to register.

"Sources in the Comelec revealed that as of Dec. 31, 2000, 34,404,525 people were already registered. So the number of those who have not registered cannot be more than 350,000," Osmeña said.

Step-by-step

In a step-by-step explanation of registration procedures, Benipayo showed that the entire process from the filing of applications for registration to the inspection and verification of the registrants would take until May 15 to finish.

"That is the true extent of the operational impossibility of the course of action the Comelec is being asked to take," he said.

"(Besides) all this talk about amending the law to remove the 120-day prohibition period, our legislators better seriously consider moving the elections as well," he added.

To "fit the entire process" within the remaining days before the elections will deprive the Comelec of time to evaluate the applications for registration and to weed out multiple and fictitious registrants, according to Benipayo.

"If we compromise on these safety nets, we may very well end up with a voter's list full of flying voters," he said. "If that happens, the unforgiving public will disown the results of the elections."

Benipayo said that even without the legal obstacles to the special registration, particularly Republic Act 8189 which prohibits registration of voters 120 days before a regular election, "the last 61 days will not be a walk in the park for the Comelec."

Benipayo cited five reasons:

The Comelec has to complete by March 19 the Projects of Precincts, which shall indicate the total number of established precincts and the number of registered voters per precinct in a city or municipality. Without the final Projects of Precincts, the poll body cannot determine the proper allocation of official ballots, election returns, and other paraphernalia. "More succinctly without the projects of precincts, we don't know how many forms to print and so we're liable to come up short," he said.

The Board of Election Inspectors (BEI) must be constituted on or before March 14. Election officers must furnish all candidates and political parties not later than March 26 with the list of BEI members and the precinct where they are assigned and the barangay where that precinct is located.

The Book of Voters, which contains the approved Voter Registration Records of registered voters in a particular precinct, must be inspected, verified and sealed from March 30 to April 15.

The Computerized Voters List must be finalized and printed out for use on Election Day.

The preparation, bidding, printing and distribution of the Voters Information Sheet must be completed on or before April 15.

In San Jose, Occidental Mindoro, ousted President Joseph Estrada said the administration would take advantage of the new registration to cheat in the elections.

"Maybe the administration will fill up the registration forms themselves. That may be their intention (for this special registration). It was after all the previous (Ramos) administration that masterminded the *dagdag-bawas* (vote padding and shaving) scheme," he said.

Estrada joined senatorial candidates of the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino-Pwersa ng Masa who campaigned in San Jose yesterday.

In Davao City, the Movement for the Advance of Student Power (MASP), announced that its members would go on hunger strike in front of the Comelec regional office in the city late this week or on Monday to press for the holding of the special registration.

Grace de Pedro, spokesperson of MASP-Davao City, said they would not lift the hunger strike unless the Comelec grants their demand.

She disclosed that some 50 students from various schools in Davao City had committed to join the hunger strike.

More are expected to join once the hunger strike begins.

"The youth are hungry to vote. Comelec should respect our rights to vote," De Pedro said. ***With reports from Armand N. Nocum in Manila; Jun Malig, PDI Central Luzon Desk; Jowel F. Canuday, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

High court gives poll body until Friday to answer suits

THE SUPREME Court yesterday gave the Commission on Elections up to Friday to comment on two petitions filed by youth groups and disenfranchised voters who have asked that a special registration be scheduled to enable them to vote in the May 14 elections.

In an en banc resolution, the high court directed the Comelec to file its comment on the petitions of student Michelle Betito and that of seven youth groups and 10 individuals who asked that special registration be held for some 4 million first-time voters.

The court has consolidated the two petitions and has ordered the Comelec to file a comment "within a non-extensible period,. expiring on Friday 10 a.m."

The tribunal will hold a hearing at 3 p.m. the same day.

In her petition, the 19-year-old Betito, a student of the University of the Philippines, said she was filing the action "in behalf of 4.5 million who are 18 years old and above all over the Philippines who failed to register in the special registration held on Jan. 17, 2001.

She said that on that date, "the Comelec surreptitiously and without any public announcement held a special registration."

She said this was conducted when "the nation was in the midst of political upheaval."

People Power II started shortly before midnight of Jan. 16 after 11 senators voted during the impeachment trial not to open an envelope that allegedly contained documents linking President Estrada to the P3.2-billion Jose Velarde account.

Four days later, President Macapagal-Arroyo was sworn in.

GMA: Talks with Reds on April 27

(From page A1)

tinue undertaking confidence-building measures to enhance the atmosphere for the resumption of peace negotiations."

Ms Macapagal said the government had agreed to safety and immunity guarantees for rebel negotiators, their consultants and staff.

She also agreed to the following:

- Upholding the "validity and binding character of the previous agreements that were entered into between the NDF and the government from 1992 to 1998."
- Holding of further discussions on the effective implementation of the "comprehensive agreement on respect for human rights and International Humanitarian Law."

The President said these matters were among those recommended by acting Defense Secretary Eduardo Ermita, also the presidential adviser on the peace process, and Silvestre Bello III, chair of the government peace panel.

The recommendations were the result of Bello's initial talks with NDF leaders in the Netherlands last week.

Bello submitted his report to the President Monday night.

On Saturday, the NDF and the government peace panel announced in a joint statement that they would resume talks in a "mutually acceptable foreign neutral venue."

But during her weekly press conference, Ms Macapagal said "the matter of venue would be further studied and evaluated by Cabinet Cluster E before we make a final decision."

Many officials argue against holding talks in a foreign country, saying the insurgency is a domestic problem best solved in the Philippines.

Rebel leaders, however, say they and their staff will be placed under close surveillance and subjected to harassment by the military if the talks are held in the country.

Ms Macapagal also welcomed the NDF commitment to release Army Maj. Noel Buan, whom the New People's Army captured in July 1999.

She ordered a one-month ceasefire in 11 provinces for the safe release of Buan after another rebel captive was killed last week in a gun battle between his captors and soldiers.

Chief Insp. Abelardo Martin, police chief of Dolores in Quezon province who was seized in November 1999, was apparently hit by a stray bullet and bled to death after the gun battle.

The military said the gun battle was a "chance encounter" but the rebels claimed it was a botched mission to rescue Martin ahead of a rebel plan to release him along with Buan.

The rebels pulled out of peace talks nearly two years ago after the Senate approved an agreement allowing the resumption of large-scale US military exercises in the Philippines.

Soon after Ms Macapagal was sworn in as President on Jan. 20 after the ouster of her predecessor, Joseph Estrada, she ordered officials to pursue peace talks with rebel groups and to abandon Estrada's "all-out war policy" toward insurgents.

Sison's consultation

In Naga City, a general said he was wary about the consultations that communist founder Jose Maria Sison would undertake with local NDF leaders once the agreement to revive the peace talks is signed.

Brig. Gen. Marcial Collao, assistant division commander of the 2nd Infantry Division, said yesterday that the consultations would help consolidate the rebel forces.

Collao said the government should learn from its decision to allow Nur Misuari, Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) chair, to consult with his commanders years ago.

"The MNLF had become very bold after Misuari's consultation with his leaders. There is a need for the government to further study the proposal of Sison because of its implication on the peace and order," he said.

Like Misuari, Sison could provide the motivation and leadership to the local communist leaders after the consultations, Collao said. ***With reports from AP and Juan Escandor Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

Erap psychs up self . . .

(From page A1)

ruling was flawed because it had been based on an INQUIRER report on former Executive Secretary Edgardo Angara's diary. In his account of Estrada's last days in Malacañang, Angara quoted the disgraced leader as saying he was tired and wanted to quit.

"We are carefully studying this motion for reconsideration because the decision was based on newspaper accounts," Estrada said.

"My lawyers are amused, because this is the first time in legal history that this has happened," he added.

Estrada insisted he never signed a resignation letter, claiming he left Malacañang only to avoid bloodshed.

The tribunal, however, has rejected Estrada's argument in his petition asking the court to declare Ms Macapagal only as "acting President"

"I have not lost hope in the Supreme Court," Estrada said.

Ombudsman Aniano Desierto is itching to slap Estrada with charges of plunder, bribery, graft, unexplained wealth, perjury, and other lesser crimes.

Estrada, however, voiced doubts he could get a fair trial under the Macapagal administration.

"In my opinion, I have been convicted already in the newspapers, by the Ombudsman and by Justice Secretary (Hernando) Perez," Estrada said.

Friends

He also accused the Macapagal administration of pressuring his friends into testifying against him, claiming those who refused were threatened with similar charges of plunder.

One such friend is plastics king William Gatchalian, majority owner of the resort firm Waterfront Philippines Inc.

Justice Secretary Hernando Perez yesterday said nothing came out of his meeting with Gatchalian on Monday evening.

"He's saying he's not guilty of any wrongdoing, but I pointed out there are records and claims that the funds of (Social Security System) and the (Government Service Insurance System) were used to buy shares in Gatchalian's company," Perez told Palace reporters.

Perez said he told Gatchalian that he would show him the sworn statement of Carlos Arellano, former administrator of the Social Security System, and Federico Pascual, former head of the Government Service Insurance System.

Arellano and Pascual earlier said Estrada was paid hefty commissions from stock investments of state-run pension funds in "crony" companies, like Belle Resources Corp. and Waterfront Philippines, Inc.

"He (Gatchalian) is in big trouble. It will be better for him to help us and reveal what was his participation (in alleged shady business dealings) with former President Estrada," Perez said.

He said Gatchalian could be charged as an accessory to plunder, should he refuse to cooperate.

"This is an entirely new case," Perez said.

Lucio Tan

Another Estrada friend who refuses to cooperate with prosecutors is tobacco and beer tycoon Lucio Tan, majority owner of Allied Banking Corp.

Deputy Ombudsman Margarito Gervacio yesterday threatened to cite Allied Bank for contempt for refusing to give investigators records of Estrada's alleged accounts with the bank.

Eleven other banks have complied with similar subpoenas issued by the ombudsman.

"We gave Allied Bank 48 hours to comply with our last order for it to open the records of the accounts that we're interested in," Gervacio said.

He said the government could file charges of obstruction of justice against bank officials if they failed to comply.

Gervacio said the bank was contesting the authority of the Ombudsman to look into the bank records and that it was "willing to go to the Supreme Court" to fend off the investigators.

Ombudsman Desierto said Allied Bank officials had decided to go to the Court of Appeals to stop him from examining the bank records of Estrada.

Desierto said bank officials yesterday filed a manifestation asking him to hold in abeyance any action on the bank's failure to comply with the order.

"The manifestation said the bank would file a petition for certiorari and prohibition with the appellate court to stop us by questioning our jurisdiction to examine bank records," Desierto said.

Desierto said the subpoena duces tecum he had issued was part of the investigation of Estrada's alleged ill-gotten wealth estimated at P20 billion.

According to Allied Bank officials, the Foreign Currency Deposit Act barred the government from scrutinizing Estrada's foreign currency accounts.

Desierto, however, contended the law only covered accounts deposited by foreign nationals and not Filipinos.

Several banks have turned over records of Estrada's deposit accounts. These are the International Exchange Bank, Metrobank, Security Bank and Trust Company, United Coconut Planters Bank, Philippine Savings Bank, Equitable PCI Bank, United Overseas Bank, Citibank and Asia United Bank.

PPC candidates

Even so, administration senatorial candidates seem to be having a hard time exploiting the plunder cases against Estrada to their advantage.

Ask Makati Rep. Joker Arroyo, who expressed dismay over the lukewarm response of students of the Philippine Normal University and Manuel L. Quezon University to his query on whether Estrada should be placed behind bars while on trial for plunder.

Students in both schools warmly welcomed the candidates of the People Power Coalition but gave a weak "yes" to Arroyo's query.

"The answer is not convincing," Arroyo told PNU students. "There is hesitation . . . That means you pity Estrada, that is the issue."

He told MLQU students that this was "a serious issue."

Arroyo told students in both universities that their responses were both a far cry from the "overwhelming yes" of students from six Cebu universities.

Batangas Rep. Ralph Recto and lawyer Francis Pangilinan got a more enthusiastic response from the young crowd when they mentioned the names of their celebrity wives, Vilma Santos and Sharon Cuneta, in their campaign spiel. ***Reports from Christine Avendaño, Armand Nocum, Michael Lim Ubac, and AFP***

Palaweños find a way to lick slick

(From page A1)

source of pollution in the province: They held a street party on March 10.

Carrying a liter of used oil each, students, fishermen, household members, tricycle drivers, owners of tourist establishments and boat operators trooped to a closed portion of Rizal Avenue here as early as 6 p.m.

For every liter of oil, a raffle ticket was issued by members of the 4th district Auxiliary Coast Guard. Prizes were donated by tourist establishments.

Those who could not bring used oil were told to donate P25 for the used oil retrieval project before they were allowed to join the street party. Music was provided by three bands from a makeshift stage.

A liter of used oil can pollute more than one million liters of seawater and contaminate 1.7 million liters of fresh water, water experts and researchers say.

The Philippine Coast Guard Auxiliary conceptualized the used oil retrieval project a year ago after finding that more than 1.2 million liters of engine oil were entering Palawan yearly.

The figure is increasing, according to Coast Guard officials.

Since motorcycles and boats burn out only 20 percent of engine oil, PCGA members surmised that the province was accumulating about 900,000 liters of used oil yearly.

Some 400,000 liters of used oil were being discharged by boat operators into the sea, while about 500,000 liters enter the soil, the experts say. They attributed the situation to the low level of public awareness about used oil pollution.

Claudio Schoch, Swiss owner of a restaurant and resort owner and an active member of the PCGA, came up with the idea for the used oil project after it was found that used engine oil was being disposed of indiscriminately into the sea and soil.

The haphazard disposal of used oil into the sea is even more dangerous than dynamite fishing, Schoch said.

Depending on the temperature, used oil either floats or sinks to the corals, eventually destroying the breeding place of fish and other marine animals.

Proponents of the used-oil retrieval project said they hoped to drum up awareness of the need for proper used oil disposal.

They cited the city's "Feast of the Forest" or tree planting festival, which instituted 11 years ago the concept of active community role in protecting the environment while having fun.

In tapping the enthusiasm of the people to protect the environment, the proponents said they aimed to pressure the provincial government to enact a law prohibiting the spilling of oil into the sea and the soil.

Lawyer Allan Carlos, project executive director of the used oil campaign, said his group wanted the people to realize the danger posed by used oil.

Most people, Carlos said, were not aware that they were keeping toxic waste in their own backyards.

The PCGA was able to collect 1,600 liters of used oil during the night-long street party. Gate donations reached P12,000.

The group intended to collect a bigger volume of used oil from the barangay repositories that they intend to set up in certain areas.

The collected used oil will be shipped to oil recycling plants in Batangas and Iloilo. Used oil can be made into engine lubricants.

Schoch said the estimated price of P700 per drum that recycling companies pay for used oil would be enough to cover the shipping cost of the used oil out of Palawan.

Eventually, the PCGA said its efforts would pressure oil companies to recycle used engine oil.

The PCGA, headed by Commodore Higinio Mendoza, used the P50,000 donated by Philippine National Oil Co. for the printing of raffle tickets, posters and information materials on used oil.

Tourist establishments, like Ten Knots and Dos Palmas, provided the prizes for the raffle draw.

The Palawan Tropical Forestry Protection Program gave three drums of used oil, plus P15,000 cash.

Several politicians contributed P10,000, while the city government shouldered the cost of food amounting to P13,000.

The PCGA has 300 members in Palawan alone. It has 17,000 members in 10 different districts.

With the success of the used oil fiesta, the 4th district of the PCGA said it hoped that the other districts in the country would adopt the project.

Cagayan lad tops . . .

(From page A1)

female cadet to top the PMA merit roll.

Erap namesake

A namesake of disgraced President Joseph Estrada is also among this year's graduates.

Joseph Jason Estrada of Aritao, Nueva Vizcaya, is No. 166.

The Class Goat is Frederick Isla, who is last at No. 195.

Isla, who hails from Gerona, Tarlac, is joining the Army.

"Since his plebe days, (Tabutol's) intelligence had started to manifest although he is a very ordinary-looking individual. Because of his good academic performance, we knew that this kid was going to make it. He is such a nice young man," Brig. Gen. Eduardo Purificacion Jr., PMA assistant superintendent and dean of academics, told the INQUIRER.

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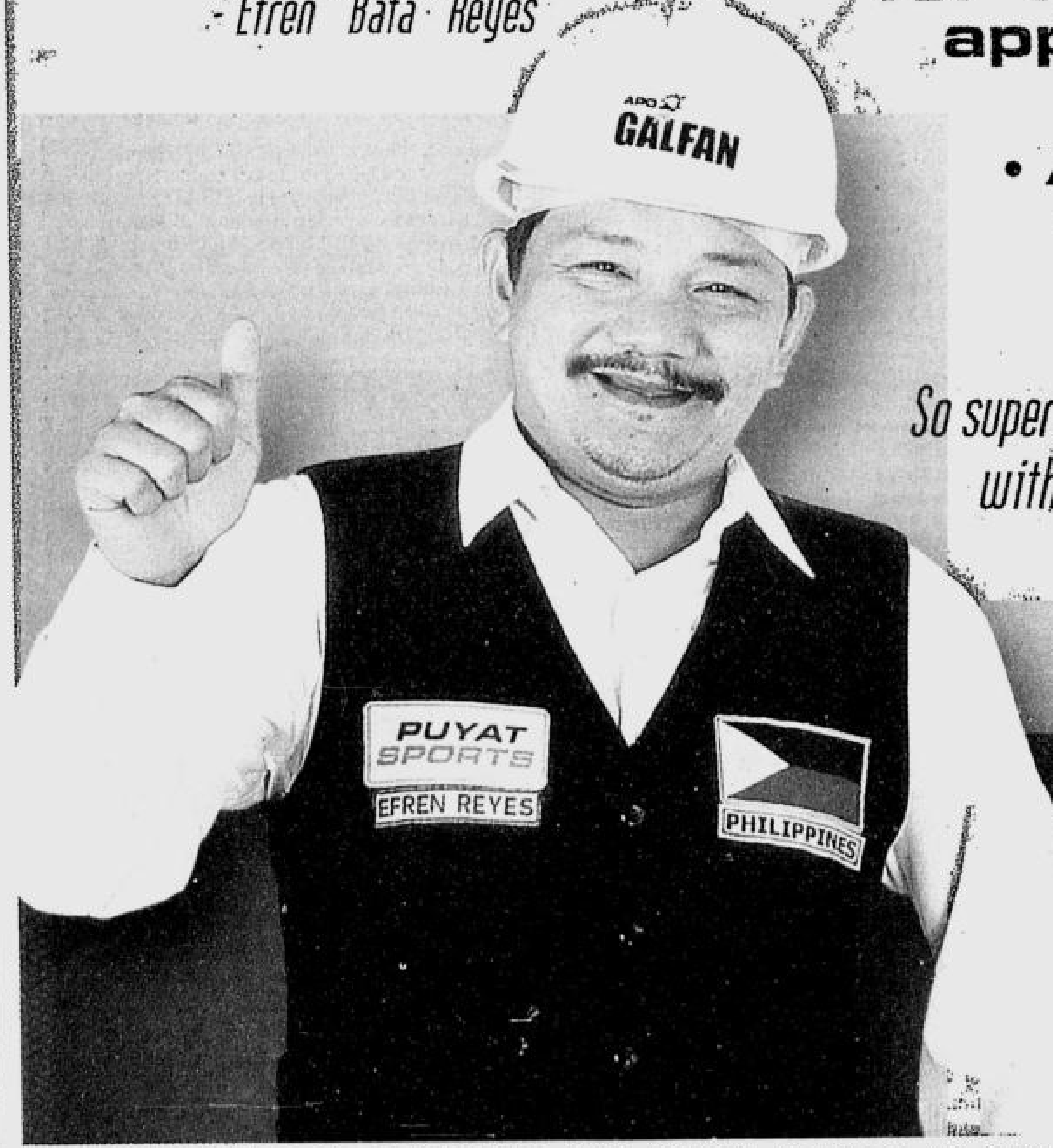

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SEABA TOURNEY

PBL stars to represent RP 5

By Dennis Eroa

AN ALL-Star PBL selection is all set to keep the country's flag proudly flying in the South East Asia and the Southeast Asian Games basketball championships this year following the decision of BAP president Freddie Jalasco to disband the Boysie Zamar-coached nationals.

PBL Commissioner Chino Trinidad said he will announce the composition of the new national team today. "The team will have its initial practice tomorrow (Wednesday) at the RFM Gym."

Jalasco sought the help of the PBL after disbanding the national team aligned with the Tiny Literal camp. Zamar and the players voted overwhelmingly to support Literal and his group on Monday at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex.

"Yes, it was the last straw which broke the camel's back," admitted Jalasco in yesterday's PSA Forum at Holiday Inn-Manila. "It should not be about personality but the rightful authority to lead the BAP."

The Philippine Olympic Committee has recognized Jalasco's presidency as legitimate.

Trinidad, in close consultation with PBL chair Dioceldo Sy, said the league is "deeply honored" to form a highly competitive team.

In a one page statement, Trinidad said the PBL entered the fray in order to avert an impending crisis. The country will defend its SEABA title from April 2-7 at the Philsports.

In his statement, Trinidad did not mention the SEA Games slated September in Kuala Lumpur.

But Jalasco told the Forum that the same PBL team will also defend the country's title in the SEAG.

PBA Commissioner Jun Bernardino, who also guested in the weekly sports forum sponsored by Red Bull and Agfa Color, threw his support behind Jalasco's move.

Insiders said Trinidad will name Welcoat's Junel Baculi as head coach with Shark's Leo Austria as deputy. Also being considered is Leo Isaac of Montaña Jewels.

Baculi and Austria are backed up by a highly competent and youthful coaching staff. Baculi's assistants are Tino Pinat and Manny Mendoza, while Austria has Dayong Mendoza, Jing Ruiz and Boy Galabin.

Baculi and Austria aren't new to international competitions. Baculi is owner of three straight PBL titles, while Austria pocketed his first crown by steering the Power Boosters to a stirring victory in the recent Challenge Cup.

Players from Welcoat and Shark are expected to dominate the team. The shoo-ins are Yancy de Ocampo, Ryzal Castro, Gilbert Malabanan, Chester Tolomia, Ren Ren Ritualo, Michael Robinson, Eugene Tan, Marlon Legaspi, Egay Billones, Jojo Manalo and Rich Alvarez of Ateneo-Pioneer and Montaña's Gilbert Lao.

SMB eyes q'finals vs Shell

By Marc Anthony Reyes

PBA STANDINGS

	W	L
San Miguel	6	2
Red Bull	6	3
Ginebra	5	3
Shell	5	3
Alaska	5	4
Pop Cola	4	4
Mobiline	3	5
Purefoods	3	6
Tanduay	3	6
Sta. Lucia	2	6

GAMES TODAY (Philsports)
5:15 p.m.—SMB vs Shell
7:30 p.m.—Ginebra vs Pop

THERE will be two things on San Miguel Beer's mind when it sees action tonight at Philsports—pull away from the pack and ensure a PBA All-Filipino Cup quarterfinal berth.

But neither task would be easy since Shell Velocity—a team whose lineup depth and coaching method approximate that of the Beermen—will be standing on the way.

This is going to be the only meeting between the teams which own some of the league's best statistics, and are perfectly matched in every aspect of the game.

Perhaps the only edge San Miguel has over Shell is star power, but even that can't be counted upon considering the on-and-off performance of multimillionaires Danny Seigle and Danny Ildefonso.

Meanwhile, Shell's underrated crew like Mark Telan, Dale Singson and Rob Wainwright have been typifying the franchise's over-achieving image, bringing the Turbochargers among the leaders through fancy-free brand of basketball.

To illustrate the Turbochargers' hustle, they are the best in the league in terms of limiting opponents' scoring (71.8 points per night), forcing their rivals to shoot badly from the three-point zone (22.4 percent) and causing most turnovers (20.9).

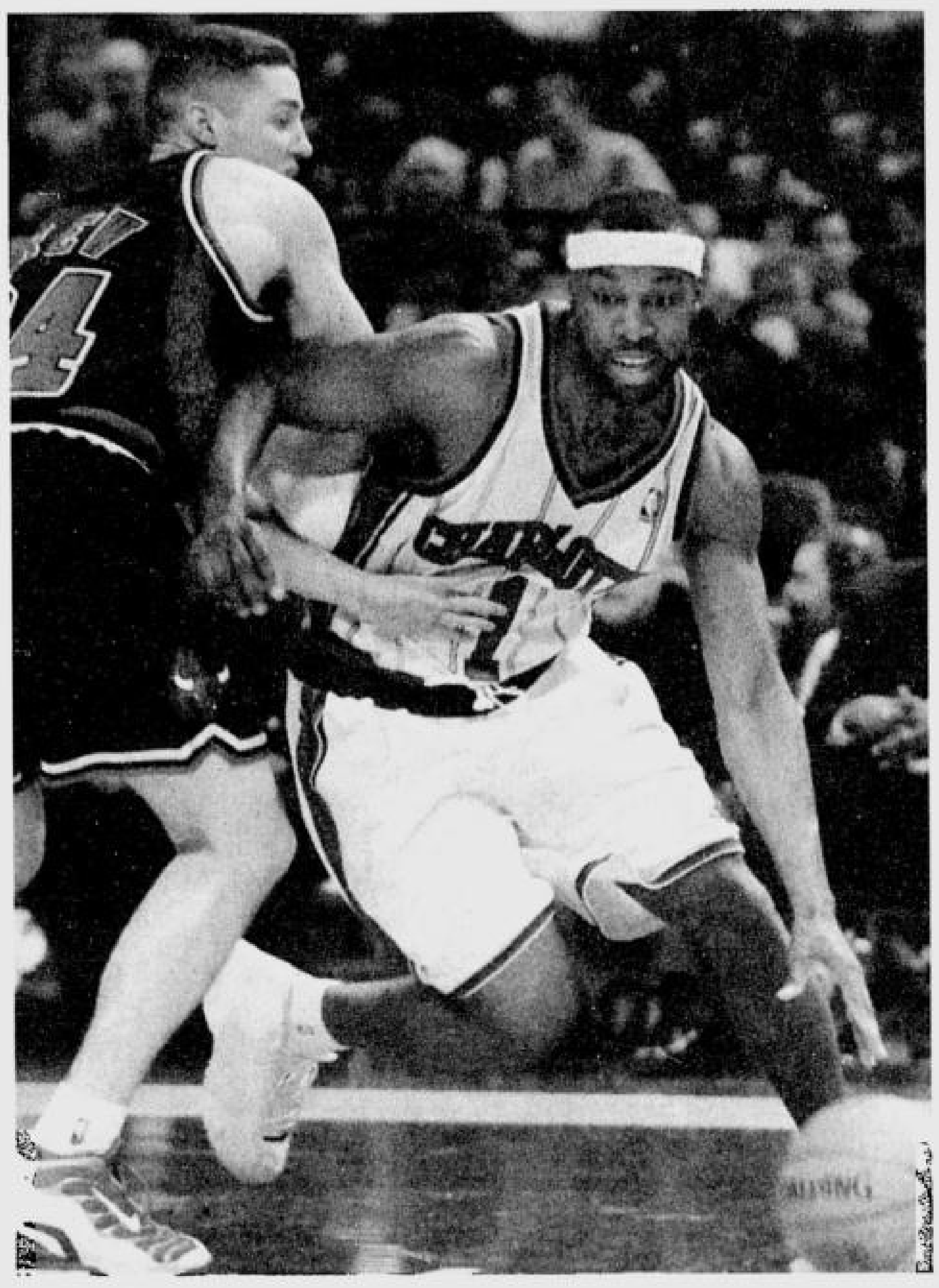
However, the Beermen are the PBA's best scoring team (with an 84.6 points per game average), the most accurate from the arc (42.6 percent) and the best in assists (18.4 per game).

MBA wants cage row resolved

IN THE past years, the records will show that the MBA has been in the forefront in supporting the BAP by lending out its players in the formation of national teams in various international competitions.

It is unfortunate that the MBA, its coaches and players are caught in the crossfire in the squabble between two factions of the BAP.

The MBA also said that in deference to its former chair and president Mr. Bert Lina, "we will allow our players to participate in the ongoing 1st Bert Lina Jam Mercado Battle of the Champions in Laguna as the MBA All-Star Selection composed of members of the national team, and after said tournament, they, our coaches and players, are to return to their mother teams."



NBA ACTION

Charlotte's Baron Davis (right) tries to wiggle his way out of Chicago's Bryce Drew in the first half of their NBA game Monday in Charlotte. The Hornets won, 102-94, their ninth straight over the latter. **Complete results:** Charlotte 102, Chicago 94; Minnesota 94, Miami 77; San Antonio 99, LA Clippers 81; Denver 84, Golden State 79. *AFP*

Jalasco takes leave of absence

BAP head sets sights on forming National Team

By June Navarro

SEA Games chief of mission Freddie Jalasco will take a leave of absence from spearheading the country's preparation for the biennial meet slated in September.

He said he will divert his focus on forming a new national basketball team, which will replace the one he dissolved for mocking his authority as president of the Philippine Olympic Committee-recognized Basketball Association of the Philippines.

Tasked to replace him as head of the joint Philippine Sports Commission-Philippine Olympic Committee SEAG Task Force is bowling's Steve Hontiveros, also first vice president of the Olympic body.

"As soon as the new national team is formed and its situation stabilized, I will plunge back in heading the country's preparations for the SEA Games," said Jalasco.

He said the players from the Philippine Basketball League will represent the national team, which will compete in the Southeast Asian Basketball Association men's championship slated April 2-9 at the Philsports Arena.

"Despite three weeks preparation, I believe we're still superior as far as raw materials is concerned in the Southeast Asian level," said Jalasco.

After scrapping the men's national team Monday night, Jalasco's next stop is the women's national team, which signed a petition last week in support of Quintellano "Tiny" Literal's leadership.

Nike camp tours set

RENOWNED American mentor Kirk Collier and Shell Turbochargers' Perry Ronquillo will team up with a stellar cast of PBA players and coaches for the staging of the 2001 Nike Basketball Camp.

Already in its fifth year, the Nike camp has evolved into a national summer spectacle with this year's event dubbed as the "Nike Be Ballcamp," set to include three provincial tours to be held in the cities of Cebu, Baguio and Davao.

Ateneo to unveil Lorenzo Center

THE MORO Lorenzo Sports Center located in the High School Complex of the Ateneo de Manila University will be formally blessed and inaugurated this Saturday.

A Mass is scheduled at 5:30 p.m. to be followed by the ribbon-cutting ceremony. A dazzling fireworks display supplied by Hannah Corp. caps the unveiling of the Moro Lorenzo statue.

Ateneo's revitalized sports program, integrating all existing athletic programs across the university's grade school, high school and Loyola schools hopes to produce homegrown talents whose background and talent will be guided by the *mens sana in corpore sano* (a sound mind in a sound body) philosophy. It is hoped that this facility will concretely support and strengthen the program, thereby raising the bar of excellence in the increasingly competitive field of sports.

The Moro Lorenzo Sports Center boasts of the first 200-meter indoor track oval in the country today, state-of-the-art basketball court, official volleyball court both convertible to two training courts; weights room fitted with Hammer Weights equipment, reputed to be the best; a deck for martial arts training; locker rooms with showers, classroom;, audio-visual room and an Ateneo-Searle/Pfizer sports medicine clinic.

More than a varsity training facility, Ateneo envisions the center to evolve into a complete sports and health facility, not only for its athletes, but also for the entire Ateneo family.

Salute

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

HERE'S a glass to bravery, to those cagers who left the National Team with rebellion in their hearts. They were not exactly rebels without a cause. They had a belief to cling on, conviction to fight for. Whether right or wrong, it did not matter. What mattered was they had balls, a rare commodity these days.

They were a rare breed—those 22 who voted against Freddie Jalasco. Even coach Boysie Zamar ought to be congratulated. He, too, voted against Freddie. They did not exactly stand up for their right, they stood up for the beat of their hearts.

"We rarely see him (Freddie Jalasco)," they said.

They value the presence of their leader, if not all of the time, most of the time. So, the guy they see most of the time—Tiny Literal—is the one they consider as their true leader. Thus, in the instant voting they had on Monday, 22 of the 23 players present rejected the leadership of Freddie.

That was a defiance of the first-degree. It was like seeing Edsa Dos all over again: the people rejecting Erap.

Before they made that historic vote, Freddie warned them that if they voted against him, "I'll be forced to disband the team and replace it with an entirely new one."

They ignored Freddie's warning and Freddie did as promised: He disbanded the team and is now looking for new players to compose the squad for both the Seaba and SEA Games.

The players sided with Tiny, whose quixotic quest for the presidency of the Basketball Association of the Philippines has become the hottest sports news since Eugene Torre's group erased the Philippine Chess Federation from the face of the national sporting scene.

While Tiny, whose election as BAP president some weeks back was deemed invalid by the Philippine Olympic Committee, has the vote of the ruled (the players, primarily), Freddie has the backing of the ruler(s). The ruler is Cito Dayrit, POC president, who has declared Freddie as the rightful BAP head. Chair Butch Tuason of the Philippine Sports Commission followed suit and seconded Cito.

Days later, Lito Puyat, BAP chair, informed Boris Stankovic through a letter to recognize Freddie as BAP head and not Tiny. Boris is the world's most powerful amateur basketball animal; he is the Fiba secretary general. He will surely listen to Puyat, a former two-time Fiba president.

But still, I salute the rebelling players. They chose heart more than what is right.

Few people are like that.

That is why heart-choosers almost always finish last.

Sokors spank Laguna, 91-84

By Roy Luarca

GAMES TODAY
(Camp Vicente Lim, Calamba, Laguna)
2:00 p.m.—Joonang U (Korea) vs RP Men's Team
3:30 p.m.—Laguna Lakers vs Cebu Lhuillier

STA. CRUZ, Laguna—Just how far has South Korea advanced in basketball was shown by Joonang University yesterday as it downed Laguna, 91-84, in the inaugural of the 1st Bert Lina-Jam Mercado Battle of Champions at the San Luis Sports Complex here.

The Koreans, four-time National University Games champions back home, turned out to be speedy on the breaks and deadly from the outside as they hounded the Lakers from beginning to end for the convincing triumph.

Spearheaded by national players Kim Joo Sung and Park Ji Hyun, the Koreans allowed the Lakers to come no closer than five points in the second half as they also ruled the boards behind twin towers Kim and Cho Sang Hun, both 6-foot-9, who neutralized Laguna's Jeffrey Flowers and Chris Clay.

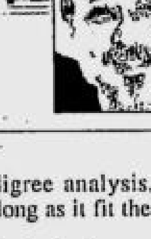
Sampras ends slump

INDIAN WELLS, California —Pete Sampras, ending a three-match losing streak that was his longest in four years, served and volleyed his way to a methodical 6-4, 6-4 victory over David Prinosil in Monday's first round of the men's Masters Series tournament.

Andre Agassi also won his opening match, defeating Hicham Arazi 6-3, 6-2. Last year, Arazi stunned Agassi, then ranked No. 1 in the world, with a three-set victory in the first round at Indian Wells. *AP*

Remembering John

WHAT CAN I SAY



Bebo Quiros

MONDAY, the 12th of March, 2001. It's been forty days since the death of our dear friend, John Felix. Friends and family have come together to remember and reminisce. We recall mostly good times with John. Writing for the newsletter "The Philippine Thoroughbred" during the early salad days of the Philippine Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders Organization (Philtobo) some years back, we submitted this quick brief on John, called "John Felix, ESQ".

"An enigma. A chameleon. A charming loquacious 60-year-old lothario with a perpetual mischievous grin. A tale-spinner of great repute. The Numero Uno horse trader and a major jobber of tack, pharmaceutical and veterinary supplies. A walking advertisement for kape barako. All these and perhaps more-that's John Felix.

I remember drinking coffee with John at the concession stand adjacent to the Fasig -Tipton Sales arena on a blustery cold winter evening in November 1992. That was my first visit to Lexington, Kentucky sales rings. Unorthodox, but what can I say about the maestro?

He never really took the time to look at a horse in its stall. It was too cold outside. It was snowing. He would look at a mare as it came through the ring. If it looked fairly well, regardless of conformation and without the benefit of veterinary inspection or pedigree analysis, John would buy it as long as it fit the "budget".

I never learned what budget or whose. Nevertheless, his methods, primitive as they would be viewed in this day of cervical scans, ultrasounds and biomechanical match-ups, do work. His clientele keep on coming back for more. Ask Jun Paman, Joy Rojas and the Gate 4 crowd. Ask Iking Araneta. Ask Dr. Antonio Co. Ask Uncle Dick Katigbak, our Philracom Chairman.

The names roll off his tongue like the sweetest of candy: Barkway, Burnley Lad, Magdaragat, Zoom Feet, Bishop Blue, Conquistadorquest, Gen Gen Angel, Heaven on Earth, Good Provision, Nevada Star, Magulo Jun, Fight with Honor, Maestro Real, Gising Gising, Puting Puti, and the successful stallion , It's The One. John was involved either in their purchase or the purchase of their dam.

While his choice of friends at times is questionable, John remains a valuable communicator between many fractious sectors of the racing industry. As a repository of gossip, he is capable of mending fences when need be, suggesting clandestine meetings over copious cups of coffee at the Shangri-La Manila lobby well into the dawn.

John's latest gambit is his liaison work for the British Bloodstock Agency (England), New Zealand Bloodstock, International Race Horse Transport (IRT), the Metro Manila Turf Club, the Philippine Racing Commission (Philracom) and the Philippine Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders Organization (Philtobo)."

Since this article was written, there was one last trip to Kentucky in 1997 when we purchased the last batch of yearlings at the Keeneland September Sale prior to the Asian financial crisis. Outstanding purchase at this sale was Colegiala. Joss Collins of the BBA did the buying. John brought them all home.

Sometime in 1998, John suffered a severe bout of pneumonia on a trip to Las Vegas, USA to visit family. He spent nine days in the ICU in a very deep funk. Knowing that he almost lost his life that time, he decided to spend the last years of his life enjoying himself to the fullest. His caffeine breaks were usually accompanied by the ubiquitous cigarette that would hang from the side of his mouth. He had a perennial cougher's hack. He didn't care. And he didn't lose the twinkle in his eye each time a pretty lass walked past him.

We knew the end wouldn't be too far away. He came back from Las Vegas pale and wan. However, he began to regain his color within two months of his return. So we kidded him and suggested he come with us to New Zealand - horse heaven - before he took off to chat with the seraphim and the cherubim. So he allowed us to take him on one last trip in January 1999. He enjoyed New Zealand - and how.

Those of us who knew John remember him in some fashion or other. However, all of us will remember him as the bloodstock agent who sold Northern Edge to Johnny Tionloc. Northern Edge is the Far North mare that foaled Silver Story, judged Horse of the Year 2000 by the Philippine Sportswriters Association (PSA) and the Philtobo. Silver Story's success was the feather in John's cap. Some of us used to kid him, that if anyone carved out his epitaph, it would read "John Felix, grandpa of Silver Story". He used to crack up at each retelling. We know that he would still be laughing now.

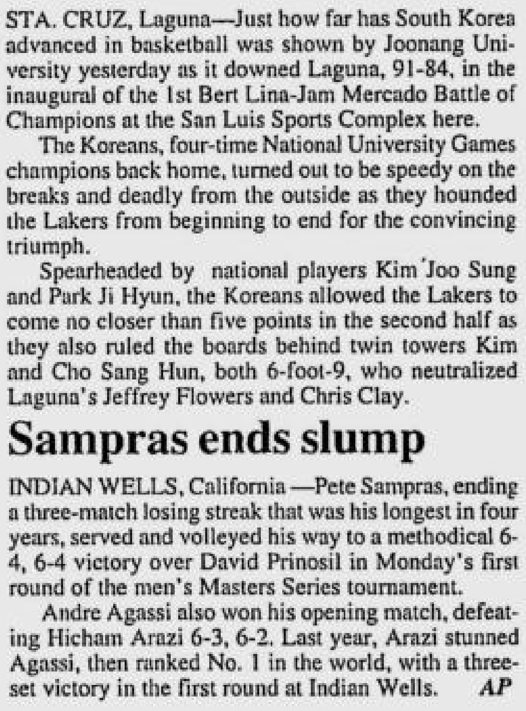
John Felix was born on the 27th of June 1938 to Don Jose Felix and Dona Aurora Strong. Born a Pinoy, he managed to travel as a Kano. He died on the 1st of February 2001. He was 62. His family, his wife, Aurora, his children Dolores, Joseph Michael and Jesyl, thank all who came and kept vigil.

John Felix, horseman. We salute you.

SPORTS ON TV

COMPILED BY LORENZO MANGUIAT

BASKETBALL: NBA - Sacramento Kings vs Orlando Magic at 9 a.m. (r- 8 p.m.) on Star Sports
TIVO NIT First Round at 1 p.m. on ESPN
TENNIS: ATP Citrix Tennis Championships, Semifinals at 10 p.m. on Star Sports
Masters Series (Indian Wells), Early Round Coverage Day #2 tomorrow at 12:30 a.m. on ESPN
GOLF: PGA - The Honda Classic, Third Round at 8 a.m. (r) on Star Sports
This is the PGA Tour at 9 p.m. on Star Sports
WRESTLING: WCW Worldwide at 3 p.m. (r) on Star Sports
BOWLING: PBA - The Battle at Little Creek at 11:30 a.m. (r) on ESPN
MOTOR SPORTS: Motoworld at 8 a.m. on ESPN
Max Power at 6 p.m. on Star Sports
SOCCER: Spanish Football League at 12 noon (r) on Star Sports
Football Focus at 5 p.m. (r) and tomorrow at 3 a.m. on ESPN



CHAMP WITH 'BATA'

Efren "Bata" Reyes congratulates Michael Martin, winner of the recently concluded First Year Anniversary 9-ball challenge of Big Shots Bar & Billiards sponsored by Revicon, Dep Styling Gel, FA for men, Jansport Backpack and Lipovitan. Reyes himself won the SMB 9-Ball Supreme Masters last Saturday to pocket P100,000.

No Petrushka in Dubai

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates—An injury has forced top British filly Petrushka out of next week's $6-million Dubai World Cup. Petrushka, winner of three Group One races in England, Ireland and France, had a workout at the Nad Al Sheba race course on Sunday night. Harry Herbert, managing director of the group which owns the horse, said Monday that Petrushka sustained "a small chip to her off-hind fetlock." *AP*

SPORTS

AL S. MENDOZA, Editor ▨ **EDWIN M. VILLANUEVA**, Assistant Editor

Final Four ticket woes

MINNEAPOLIS—Good luck to those looking for Final Four tickets that begin March 31. By the end of the month, most of the 46,000 seats in the Metrodome will be long gone—sold to the powerful and connected. "It's the hottest ticket for any sporting event in America with the possible exception of the Masters," said Bill Lester, executive director of the Metropolitan Sports Facilities Commission. At face value, tickets that include all three games go for $120, $140 or $160 depending on location. Tickets already are being sold on the Internet for up to $680 each. *AP*

Salud withdraws protest

Peñalosa fight vs Japanese to push through on May 20

RUDY Salud, manager of WBC International super flyweight champion Gerry Peñalosa, withdrew his protest yesterday over the plan to stage the world title fight on May 20 between champion Masamori Tokuyama and In Joo Cho in South Korea.

In a letter he faxed to WBC president Jose Sulaiman, Salud said their camp had agreed with the decision to hold the fight in Seoul instead of Pyongyang, North Korea after learning that it was reached in "good faith."

Salud had earlier agreed to let Peñalosa, the No. 1 contender, step aside and allow a rematch between Tokuyama and Cho, who is the former titlist.

Tokuyama is a Japan-born North Korean, while Cho hails from Seoul.

Realizing that the title fight is a first in the history of professional boxing and could further promote peace between the two Koreas, Salud agreed to forego the mandatory title shot allotted to Peñalosa provided that the title fight is held in Pyongyang.

However, when Salud learned that promoter Kusung Lee was set to stage the title fight in Seoul in violation of their agreement reached at the WBC convention in Mexico last October, he protested.

What changed Salud's mind, though, was when he learned that Lee went to Pyongyang to convince the North Korean to host the fight. In the trip with Lee were Takuyama's father and other Japanese-North Korean personalities.

In his letter, Salud said the action of Lee was "more than enough show of good faith."

Salud said he would now agree to the fight being held anywhere.

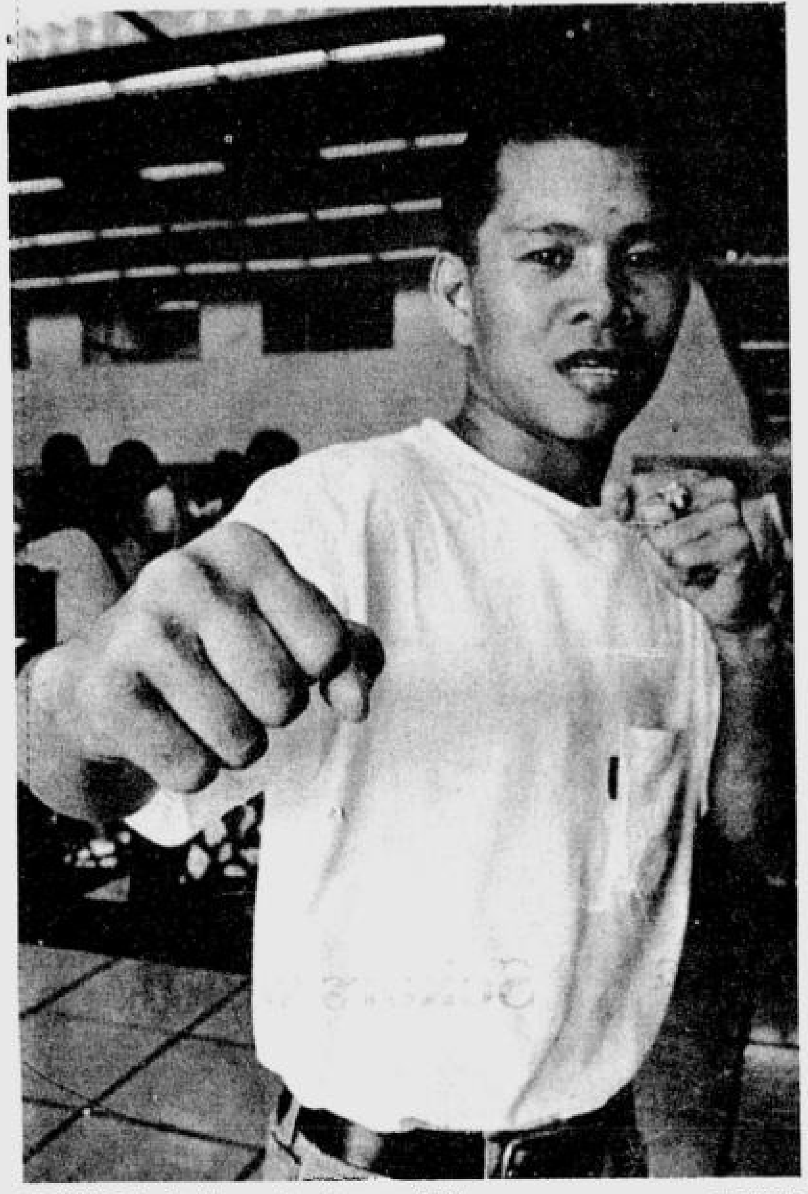
In the meantime, Salud said Peñalosa will try to keep in shape by fighting former WBA junior flyweight champion Keiji Yamaguchi in May at the Araneta Coliseum

Salud said that with a Peñalosa win on May 20, "I expect Peñalosa to meet the winner of the Tokuyama-Cho fight 90 days from May 20."

In a separate fax to Mauro Betti, chair of the WBC International championships, Salud said that he believes Yamaguchi will be a worthy challenger since the young Japanese has a record of 29-6-1, with 11 KOs.

Yamaguchi had also gone the distance before bowing to Cho in a title fight.

Peñalosa lost the title to Cho in Seoul in 1999 in a controversial split decision and suffered a similar fate on Jan. 2, 2000, also in the South Korean capital.



PENALOSA: Badly needs a tune-up fight. FILE PHOTO

Alaxan golf slated

GOLFERS from more than 40 residential villages in Metro Manila will compete in the Alaxan Inter-village golf tournament which kicks off on April 4 at the Wack Wack Golf and Country Club.

Unilab senior vice president Susan Yumul and Inter-village organizer Vince Villafuerte recently sealed the agreement that forged Alaxan's support of the tournnament.

The inaugural leg will pit Quezon City villages that include Acropolis, Corinthian Gardens, Filinvest, Greenmeadows, La Vista, Philamhomes, St. Ignatius, White Plains, Xavierville and Don Enrique Heights.

PFF sets football seminar

THE PHILIPPINE Football Federation has chosen 30 coaches nationwide to participate in the AFC license coaching course starting tomorrow at the Philsports Complex in Pasig City.

PFF president Rene Adad said the Asian Football Confederation has sent Singaporean Jita Singh, a former national coach and FIFA-accredited instructor, to conduct the week-long clinic.

"We welcome this AFC coaching course which I hope will help our coaches to keep them abreast on the latest soccer trends and developments," said Adad.

"I believe that for football to develop coaches also need to have sound education in the rudiments of the sport which we hope to inculcate in the next few days," said Singh who handled the Singapore national squad from 1979-84.

Ang shares Subic honors

JASON Ang of Angeles City showed up a 32-angler field by landing the heaviest Talakitok (10 kg) last weekend to share championship honors with Henry Ordinanza and Armand Uy during the Subic Bay Yacht Club/Esquire Industrial Sales sportfishing tournament at the Subic Freeport.

Philippine-Game Fishing Foundation president Rey Buencamino teamed up with Amado Dy for second place. Mel Morales and Darius Page settled for third place.

Some anglers blamed the less than a 100-kg total catch to the full moon. Sailfishing season is on April 5-8.

For more details, contact Rose Aberin of PGFF: tel. 373-0743 fax: 373-0248. Website: www.pgff.com.ph Email: pgff@edsamail.com.ph.

Buddy boat team winners are Ang and Ilding Abordo, champion; Rico Gueco, Efren Chua Yap, Page and Morales, first runner-up; Bert Lingayo, Capt. Ben Solis, Crispin Saez and Ferdie Layson, second runner-up.

Who will win PBA plum?

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

(CONGRATS, MASTER OF BILLIARDS! Efren "Bata" Reyes lived up to his billing as the country's foremost billiards player when he outclassed perennial rival, Francisco "Django" Bustamante, 13-10, last Saturday in the one-day, P100,000 SMB 9-Ball Supreme Masters of Billiards tournament at the Metropolis Mall in Alabang. Reyes received the winner's check from former Speaker Manny Villar, GAB chair Dominador Cepeda Jr. and billiards' eternal patrons brothers Popit and Putch Puyat of Puyat Sports).

A FEW days before the Philippine Basketball association began, an informal survey revealed that longtime followers of the league could not pick the one team that would dominate this year's All-Filipino Cup because of the balanced field.

For a time, battle-tested San Miguel Beer rode high on a 4-0 record to emerge the early team to beat in this most prestigious conference of the PBA. But pretty soon, San Miguel Beer lost that lofty standings when it suffered shocking losses to less-fancied Mobiline and newcomer Batang Red Bull, proving that the "unbeatable" Beermen could be beaten on a bad night.

However, San Miguel managed to remain the solo leader at present, sporting a 6-2 card. It is followed by unpredictable Batang Red Bull (6-3), Shell (5-3), crowd favorite Ginebra (5-3), defending champion Alaska (5-4) and rejuvenated Pop Cola (4-4). Making up the rear in the 10-team field are off-and-on Mobiline (3-5), Purefoods (3-6), Tanduay (3-6) and struggling Sta. Lucia Realty (2-6).

Today, San Miguel Beer plays Shell in the opening game of a twinbill, shooting for victory No. 7. And if San Miguel Beer prevails, it will need only two more wins to gain the twice-to-beat advantage in the quarterfinal round, being the magic winning number.

Incidentally, many fans are worried about a possible problem which San Miguel management could be facing next season in the PBA if the beer conglomorate finally acquires Purefoods this year. If the deal is consummated, it would mean that three sisters teams from San Miguel Corp. would be in the PBA, which is not allowed by the league: it allows only two sister teams to compete in any given season. Right now, SMC has already two sister teams playing in the PBA-San Miguel Beer and Ginebra. And the addition of Purefoods to the SMC group would mean that it most give up one of these three sisters teams. Which team to let go is the bigger question.

But back to the All-Filipino.

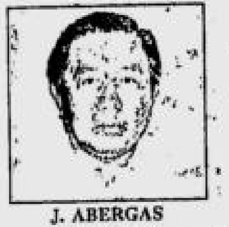
At the end of the elimination round on April 11, the top eight teams base don their cumulative win-loss records qualify for the quarterfinals. In the quarters, the No. 1 team plays No. 8, No. 2 opposes No. 7, No. 3 takes on No. 6 and No. 4 meets No. 5. The higher placed team needs to beat the lower placed team only once to advance to the semifinals while the lower placed team needs to beat the higher placed team twice to enter the semis.

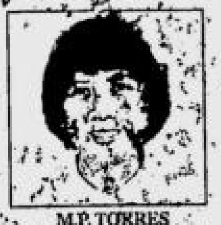
The four semifinalists will clash in a best-of-five series, with the top teams disputing the championship in a best-of seven affair. The other two losing semifinalists will in turn play a knockout game for the third and fourth places.

Meanwhile, the guessing game continues in the All-Filipino, raising the question: Just who will make it? And, as interestingly, just who will be out?

* * *

SPORTS TRIVIA. The Soviet Union bounced back by winning the seventh World Basketball Championship held in San Juan, Puerto Rico, in July 1974. After finishing third in Ljubljana, Yugoslavia, in 1970 (behind Yugoslavia and Brazil), the Soviet Union regained the crown by defeating the United states, 105-94, in its final game. The US earlier nipped Yugoslavia, 91-88, while still much earlier in the final round, Yugoslavia beat the Soviet Union, 82-79. The Philippines, marking its final appearance in the world cagefest, finished 13th in the 14-nation field.





7th MIT CE-EnSE Alumni Association, Inc.
Invitational Golf Tournament

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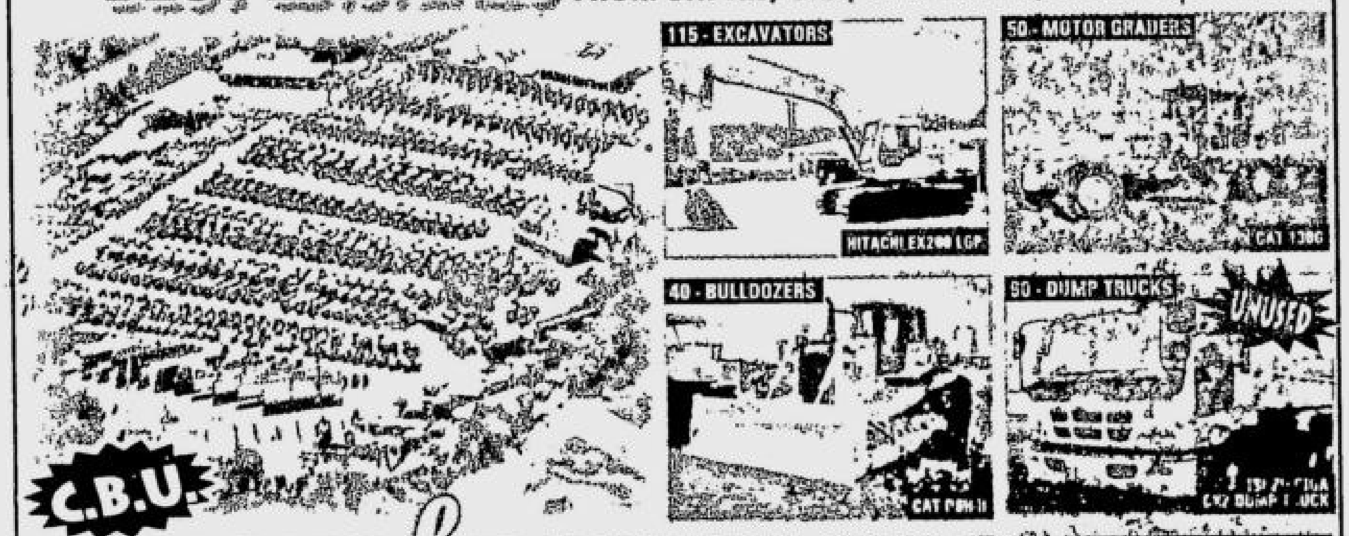
Chair-Sports

M.P. TORRES
President

All members and friends of the association are being invited to participate in their 7th - Golf Tournament, Tee off, 6:30 - 9:00 a.m. on Friday, March 16, 2001, at Valley Golf Exec., Antipolo.

For details, please call Engr. Nitoy Abergas (082) 226-4459; Engr. Jun Agbayani 948-0314; Engr. Nelson Torres (045) 961-1632 and Engr. Myra P. Torres 646-7796 / 646-9538 / 561-8920.



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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0309, Series of 2001

- Guards accused of beating up Bombo Radyo man and two boys A27

METRO
LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

- Foot-dragging leaves Maynilad in deep water A28
- Naked and dead woman puzzles Parañaque cops A28

QC trader killed after killing wife, daughter

BY PHILIP C. TUBEZA

A 60-YEAR-OLD Chinese-Filipino businessman yesterday went on a shooting spree and killed his estranged wife and daughter after they fought over their property.

David Chua himself was killed when he shot it out with his son, who was seriously injured, police said.

Chua killed his former wife Yan Su, 68, and his daughter Elizabeth Relucio, 32, in their home at Phase 3 No. 22, MY Homes in Balingasa, Balintawak, Quezon City, police said.

Chua also seriously wounded his son Charlie, 35, said Senior Insp. Rudy Jaraza, head of the Central Police District's Criminal Investigation Unit.

Chua suffered several gunshot wounds on the body after he shot it out with his son, police said. Charlie, a Philippine Army reservist, was hit thrice. Doctors were still trying to save him as of late yesterday afternoon, Jaraza said.

Yan Su was shot twice in the head. Their daughter Elizabeth also suffered several gunshots in the head, Jaraza added.

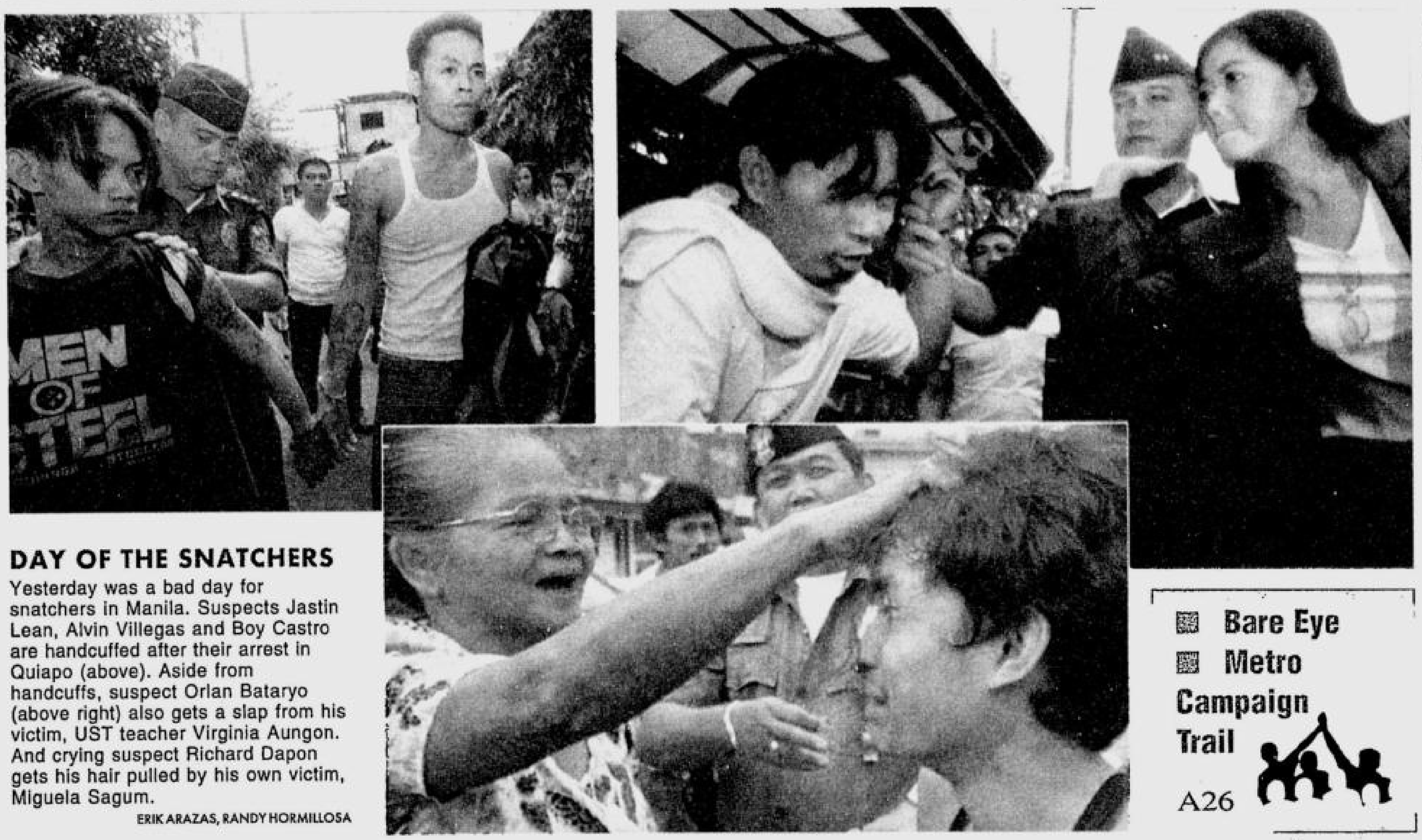
Police said they recovered a caliber .38 revolver and a .9 mm from the crime scene.

Jaraza said his men were still trying to determine who owned these guns.

Jaraza said Chua had long been separated from his wife and children and already had his own family. But yesterday morning, he went back to his former home, the police chief said.

"He would visit from time to time,"

QC TRADER/A27



DAY OF THE SNATCHERS

Yesterday was a bad day for snatchers in Manila. Suspects Jastin Lean, Alvin Villegas and Boy Castro are handcuffed after their arrest in Quiapo (above). Aside from handcuffs, suspect Orlan Bataryo (above right) also gets a slap from his victim, UST teacher Virginia Aungon. And crying suspect Richard Dapon gets his hair pulled by his own victim, Miguela Sagum.

ERIK ARAZAS, RANDY HORMILLOSA

- Bare Eye
- Metro
Campaign Trail

A26

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Suspect in fire that killed 8 people set free

BY CHRISTIAN V. ESGUERRA

POLICE are puzzled over the release of a suspect in the Valenzuela City fire on March 3 that killed all eight occupants of the house, including a 3-year-old girl.

Rolando Trinidad, 21, was arrested on Friday and fire officials filed arson charges against him, said Chief Supt. Nemesio Naron, Valenzuela Police chief.

But Naron was surprised when he learned on Monday that fire officials released Trinidad over the weekend.

"For sure they have a reason," Naron said. "But it's still unclear to me at this point."

Chief Insp. Efren Yadao, Valenzuela fire chief, could not be reached for comment.

Police said Trinidad, of Rubbermaster Street, Barangay Lingunan, Valenzuela, set fire to the house of Gloria Gibelagen on C. Molina Street in Bartolome Subdivision, Barangay Veinte Reales.

The March 3 fire claimed the lives of Alma Karen Mendez, 18, her live-in partner Danny Cubacob, 26, their daughter Rosa, 3, Mendez's mother Julieta, 35, Michelle Gibelagen, 18, and her sister Rochelle, 16, and live-in partners Michelle, 24, and Ryan, 25, police said.

Valenzuela investigators believed Trinidad intentionally torched the house after one of the women rejected him as a suitor.

Witnesses told fire investigators that Trinidad was the last person to leave the house before it went up in smoke.

A unit from the Valenzuela Station Investigation and Intelligence Bureau looked into the case and, with the help of fire officials, arrested Trinidad on Friday, Naron said.

Police claimed Trinidad lighted a piece of cloth and threw it on a pile of rags that immediately caught fire, with the flames spreading throughout the ground floor of the house.

All eight occupants of the house were then sleeping on the second floor and were trapped in the fire.

Fire officials pegged damages at P5 million.

The fire was the biggest to hit the city in recent memory.

Accountant hunted for P400,000 rob

BY CHRISTIAN V. ESGUERRA

POLICE are hunting down an accountant who allegedly masterminded the robbery of P400,000 in company payroll in Valenzuela City last week.

Chief Supt. Nemesio Neron, Valenzuela Police chief, said investigators are withholding the name of the suspect to avoid stalling operations.

Authorities are gathering more evidence before they arrest the suspect, an employee of Crisanta Garments on General Luna Street, Karuhatan, which was robbed on Friday, Neron said.

Police said seven heavily armed men stormed the factory at about 2:30 p.m. on March 9 and took around P400,000 in payroll money, jewelry, and personal items.

Police believe the robbery was an inside job.

According to Valenzuela Station Investigation and Intelligence Bureau, the suspects armed with M-16 rifles, shotguns, and handguns, barged into the factory when one Lourdes Sibol of Warnaco Inc. was about to enter the garments factory.

The suspects ordered the workers to hand over their jewelry and the payroll money before they escaped on board a white Mitsubishi L-300 van (WBX-635), Neron said.

A check with the Land Transportation Office showed the plate number did not belong to the van but to a stolen Volvo car, Neron said.

Neron led a Valenzuela SIIB team to Novaliches on Monday night where they arrested a man they believed to be one of the robbers.

But police released the suspect after witnesses failed to identify him.

MMDA transferring Payatas to Batangas?

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

THE METROPOLITAN Manila Development Authority is now being labeled the "Most Promising Agency in the Arroyo Government."

It only has itself to congratulate.

First, the MMDA promised a 15-day solution to the monumental garbage crisis in Metro Manila. This vow was made as soon as MMDA chair Benjamin Abalos assumed office in January.

Abalos failed to deliver on the promise and predictably received stinking criticisms, all of which he has parried with aplomb.

Yesterday, the Inquirer Metro section came out with a story saying Abalos has given himself a three-month deadline to solve the garbage crisis in the metropolis.

As in the first failed promise, the latest solution forwarded by the MMDA borrows a lot from an untested technique that, needless to say, is easier said than done.

***

Abalos said the MMDA would be acquiring two shredding machines, each of which could process 60 tons of garbage per hour.

He promised that the MMDA would cover the funds needed for the acquisition of the shredders. He, however, failed to back his promise with specifics.

The MMDA chair said the shredders, along with 40-foot container vans which had earlier been purchased, would be set up at Pier 18 of the Manila North Harbor to serve as composting bins.

Yesterday, however, the Inquirer's Agnes Donato received detailed complaints from concerned barangay officials around Pier 18 denouncing the unabated dumping of Metro garbage in the area.

The officials have vowed to mount a protest to protect their right and health.

***

Not to belittle the complaints around Pier 18 but, in their particular case, that metropolitan area is at least falling victim to Metro garbage itself.

This is not the case with a place in Batangas.

Last Sunday, I took a trip to Lipa City, taking the Star Highway that was built by the Ramos government but was inaugurated and next claimed as a project by the Estrada administration.

I had two purposes for the trip: visit friends and see for myself the reported dumping of Metro garbage in Malvar, Batangas.

True enough, the mounds of trash were there off the highway for everybody to see. I was later told that enormous volumes of Metro garbage had been dumped in inner barangays.

Anyway, that trip was precipitated by a complaint I had received about the criminal dumping of Metro Manila garbage in Malvar.

Having seen the proof with my own eyes, allow me to print this statement from the Lipa Archdiocesan Environmental Concerns Office, or Laeco for short:

***

The Laeco is up in arms to prevent the illegal dumping of garbage from Metro Manila in the municipality of Malvar, Batangas. Although the crime has just started, Laeco, headed by the Archbishop of Lipa, Most Rev. Gaudencio B. Rosales, has requested the offices of Governor Hermilando Mandanas, and Malvar Mayor, Mrs. Dhorry Villegas, for necessary and immediate actions be taken to prevent the area from turning into a monster dumpsite like Payatas.

It was reported by a resident that more than 20 truckloads of garbage, including hospital wastes, were dumped in an area between barangays San Andres and San Juan at around 3 a.m. Fr. Lito Malibiran, priest-coordinator of Laeco, confirmed this after an ocular inspection of the site with other priests on Feb. 26.

What most Batangueños had feared months ago is slowly becoming a reality. In a special forum called by Laeco on Sept. 8, 2000 after it learned of a proposed solid waste landfill and recycling plant in barangays Paligawan and Malabanan in the town of Balete, some 600 participants voiced their strong objection to the project.

They denounced it for the following reasons: (1) The proposed landfill is near Taal Volcano; (2) Taal Lake, source of potable water, might be contaminated; (3) There is a danger of polluting the underground water reservoir or aquifers; and (4) There could be a spread of epidemic brought about by the disease-carrying insects.

Even engineer Evelyn Estigoy, chief of the provincial government's Environment and Natural Resources Office (PG-ENRO), said in her letter to Mr. Robert Aventajado, then chair of the sanitary project, that "it will be a great threat to the environment and health of the residents of Balete."

Besides, Balete is under the tourism zone and covered by the Taal Protected Landscape and Taal Hazard Zone.

Rightly so, Gov. Mandanas assured the assembly that the provincial government is also strongly against their places being designated for sanitary landfill.

Only recently, Mandanas flatly stated at the 2nd quarterly meeting of the Batangas Bay Region Environmental Protection Council that he would not approve any landfill and recycling plant in the area. He assured the people of a clean environment while industrialization takes place in Batangas.

And then this! At the heart of Malvar, which is only about 20 kilometers from the famed Taal Lake, where flow the creeks and rivers of the municipality, has risen these mounds of monster garbage.

Farmers whose farm animals used to graze in the area complain about their early experience from the ill effects of the dumped waste. If the Laeco staff could not stand the stench of decomposing garbage and the swarming flies, imagine the plight of the residents.

Msgr. Rosales, tagged as the ecology archbishop, has vowed to oppose any plan for a garbage dumpsite or landfill in his archdiocese. We cannot, we will never host a Payatas.

100
KAYA NATING ABUTIN ANG TAGUMPAY
K.K.

SEN. Juan Flavier (right) shows his all-out support for multi-awarded public servant and Caloocan City Sangguniang Panlungsod majority floor leader Councilor Edgar "Egay" Erice. Erice, who is running for a seat in the House of Representatives, is the official candidate in the city's 2nd district of the administration's People Power Coalition and the Lakas-NUCD-UDMP party. Like Flavier, Erice has topped surveys conducted by research groups.

METRO CAMPAIGN TRAIL

PASIG City Mayor Vicente Eusebio (left) endorses the candidacy of Lakas-NUCD-UMDP's Noel "Toti" Cariño for congressman. The show of support was made during the inauguration of the party's general headquarters at the Armal building in Pasig.

LAS Piñas official candidate in the city's lone congressional seat, Tony Tamayo (third from right), former police chief and mayoral candidate Cesar Gonzalez (second from right) and popular actor and community leader Tirso Cruz III (third from left) and their candidates for councilors lead a march against traditional politicians to the Commission on Elections. Led by Tamayo, the Lakas-NUCD, PDP-Laban and Liberal Party formed a coalition. The candidates for city council seats are former Sanggunian Kabataan Federation president Nina Villadolid, civic leader Edwin Sonoy and former councilor jimmy Calamaan.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, March 14, 2001
2nd Week of Lent

1st Reading: Jer 18:18-20
Gospel: Mt 20:17-28

When Jesus was going to Jerusalem, he took the Twelve aside and said to them on the way, "See, we are going to Jerusalem. There the Son of Man will be given over to the chief priests and the teachers of the Law who will condemn him to death. They will hand him over to the foreigners who will mock him, scourge him and crucify him. But he will be raised to life on the third day."

Then the mother of James and John came to Jesus with her sons, and she knelt down to ask a favor. Jesus said to her, "What do you want?" And she answered, "Here you have my two sons. Grant that they may sit, one at your right and one at your left, when you are in your kingdom."

Jesus said to the brothers, "You do not know what you are asking. Can you drink the cup that I am about to drink?" They answered, "We can." Jesus replied, "You will indeed drink my cup, but to sit at my right or at my left is not for me to grant. That will be for those for whom the Father has prepared it."

The other ten heard all this and were angry with the two brothers. Then Jesus called them to him and said, "You know that the rulers of the nations act as tyrants, and the powerful oppress them. It shall not be so among you; whoever wants to be more important in your group shall make himself your servant. And if you want to be first, make yourself the servant of all. Be like the Son of Man who has come, not to be served but to serve and to give his life to redeem many."

Commentary

What denseness of mind-heart! The apostles were still focussed on themselves not on the Master. He had just started his discourse on his possible lot like the prophets of old, who spoke of the people's infidelity to the covenantal God. Nonetheless, it was still their ambitions that engrossed their attention. When placed in positions of leadership, is it self-sacrificing service that motivates us or is it mainly the drive to be ahead of others even at their expense, in order to call the shots? All of us have a streak of this madness, which the Gospel needs to unmask.

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SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

REMEDIAL LAW (EVIDENCE)—Alibi—This Court has ruled consistently that alibi is an inherently weak defense and should be rejected when the identity of the accused is sufficiently and positively established by the prosecution. Moreover, for alibi to overcome the prosecution's evidence, the defense must successfully prove the element of physical impossibility of the accused's presence at the crime scene at the time of the perpetration of the offense. Physical impossibility in relation to alibi takes into consideration not only the geographical distance between the scene of the crime and the place where accused maintains he was, but more importantly, the accessibility between these points. In this case, the element of physical impossibility of appellant's presence that fateful night at the crime scene has not been established. [Citations omitted.] [En Banc, Justice Quisumbing, People v. Hilot, G.R. No. 129532, October 5, 2000]

DIGEST BY R.B. VERA

'Demy' Flores in Pateros-Taguig

FLORES

DAMASO "Demy" Flores has filed with the Commission on Elections his certificate of candidacy for representative of the Pateros-Tagig congressional district.

Flores, a law graduate and first-placer in the 1952 CPA examination, is the official candidate of the Nacionalista Party.

Aguilar: 'Baseless propaganda'

LAS PIÑAS City reelectionist Mayor Vergel "Nene" Aguilar denounced his political opponents, saying their accusation was baseless and recycled political propaganda and a desperate attempt to downplay the outstanding performance of his administration.

Aguilar was reacting to the press statement of congressional candidate Antonio Tamayo who said that the victory of Aguilar and his running mate Cynthia Villar in the May elections would put Las Piñas under the complete control of the family.

Aguilar challenged Tamayo to review the Local Government Code provision on the separation of powers and functions of Congress and the city government.

Aguilar said the city government has been consistently in sound financial condition and has been cited by the Department of Finance for being one of the best managed cities in the country.

Roxas pushes health project

DR. Lito Roxas, a Pasay City councilor, was first elected in 1998. Among his achievements are the establishing of the Green Card Health Card for the Pasay City General Hospital and the approval of a budget to create the Philhealth card program, which offers medical benefits to Pasay residents.

Roxas is also responsible for giving free medical check-ups, medicines, consultations and operations at the Roxas Polyclinic, as part of a medical mission project. He has conducted several medical and dental missions in various barangays and free surgery for those with lip and mouth defects.

Roxas is an ear, nose and throat specialist and is also trained in treating breathing and swallowing disorders, in head and neck surgery and in plastic and cosmetic surgery.

He is a consultant at the Ospital ng Maynila, the Roxas Polyclinic, the United Doctors Medical Center, San Juan de Dios Hospital and the Manila Doctors Hospital.

Maliksi leads, say surveys

MALIKSI

REP. Ayong Maliksi was ahead of incumbent Gov. Bong Revilla, the popular movie star, in the gubernatorial race in Cavite, according to recent surveys.

In a Cavite-wide survey conducted two weeks ago by AV Research, a Makati-based marketing research agency, 52 percent of 300 respondents said they would vote for Maliksi, as against 47 percent for Revilla. One percent was undecided.

An earlier survey conducted last October by the same agency showed Maliksi had a lead of 30 percentage points over Revilla.

Another recent survey, conducted randomly among 700 respondents in the second district of Cavite, showed Maliksi also leading Revilla, 52-34, with 14 percent undecided.

The worsening drug problem in Cavite appeared to be the most worrisome issue for Caviteños, the AV Research survey said.

According to local political analysts, the defection of Revilla to the anti-Estrada forces at Edsa did not help the movie actor any. They said the pro-Erap voters in Cavite, mostly coming from the D and E classes and comprising the main bulk of Revilla's voters, were turned off by the governor's act.

Reports from the Maliksi camp said Revilla was mobilizing a huge group of show biz personalities for his campaign to arrest Maliksi's leadership in the surveys.

Sanlakas vs Kimberly Clark

SANLAKAS, a party-list aspirant, has filed with the National Water Resources Board a petition for the cancellation of the water permits of Kimberly Clark Philippines Inc.

Wilson Fortaleza, president of Sanlakas, said the petition is anchored on the consistent stand of the group to protect the interests of the Filipino people.

Fortaleza noted that the Constitution provides that the natural resources, which include water resources, of the Philippines are exclusively reserved to Filipino citizens and corporations 60 percent of whose outstanding capital are owned by Filipinos.

Sanlakas learned from the Securities and Exchange Commission that 87 percent of the outstanding capital of Kimberly Clark is foreign-owned.

He said that for the past years, Kimberly had been extracting water from San Pedro, Laguna by virtue of allegedly spurious permits issued by the National Water Resources Board. Sanlakas said these water permits manifest an utter misrepresentation on the part of Kimberly and abusive conduct on the part of NWRB.

Guards accused of beating up Bombo Radyo man and 2 boys

By Philip C. Tubeza

THREE security guards in Broadway Centrum in Quezon City have been accused of beating up and shooting at a Bombo Radyo account executive and two boys during a brawl inside the commercial center.

The bullets did not hit the complainants, who were able to flee.

Bombo Radyo employee Joel S. Dacanay, 31, a resident of Felix Huertas, Sta. Cruz, Manila, and two minor students accused Sunshield Security Agency guard Francisco M. Estrella, 31, a resident of Dagat-Dagatan, Caloocan, of physical injuries and attempted homicide, said investigator SPO1 Rodrigo Barrameda.

Estrella's two colleagues remain unidentified, Barrameda added.

He said the incident happened around 7:30 p.m. inside the Broadway Centrum compound at the corner of Aurora Boulevard and Dona Juana Rodriguez in New Manila, Quezon City.

Estrella was scolding one of the students for running inside the commercial center when Dacanay approached them and inquired what the trouble was.

Instead of helping calm the situation, Dacanay and Estrella got into an argument.

Dacanay said he told the guard to call his supervisor. However, when the supervisor arrived, he was of no help and allegedly even joined in beating up Dacanay and the students.

"The supposed supervisor was in street clothes and was obviously drunk," Dacanay said. "While I was talking to him, the guard rudely interrupted us."

Estrella allegedly pulled out his service firearm and pistol-whipped Dacanay on the face. The supervisor joined in and punched one of the students on the head.

Other guards, who were also in civilian clothes, also joined the fray. They struck Dacanay in the back while the others ganged up on the other student.

Outnumbered, Dacanay and the boys ran away, the account executive said.

But while they were fleeing, Estrella allegedly fired two shots at them. He missed, Dacanay said.

The complainants went to a nearby police community precinct to report the incident and later went to the University of the East-Ramon Magsaysay Hospital to have their injuries examined, Dacanay added.

TWISTED metal is all that remains of the 10-wheeler truck that collided with a container van in Marilao, Bulacan.
VAL HANDUMON

Driver, woman killed in Bulacan

By Christian V. Esguerra

A MAN and a woman were killed and another man was severely wounded after a cargo truck rammed into a 10-wheeler truck on the North Luzon Expressway in Marilao, Bulacan early yesterday morning.

Truck driver Ronaldo Bulot of Servante Street, San Jose City, Nueva Ecija and his unidentified woman companion died after they were pinned in the wreckage of their cargo vehicle and of another truck at about 3:30 a.m. at Kilometer 24 of the expressway, said Estacio Lapuz of the Philippine National Construction Co.

Truck helper Alfredo Peralta is under close observation at the Saint Martin Hospital in Bocaue, Bulacan due to severe head and body injuries, authorities added.

Investigation showed that the 10-wheeler truck (LVT-718) was slowing down due to a slight traffic buildup at Kilometer 24, when its rear was suddenly hit by the truck (TAS-619) Bulot was driving.

Bulot's truck, which was running at full speed, was on its way to Manila to deliver sacks of rice.

Its front folded like paper upon impact, pinning the driver and the woman under metal sheets and the shattered windshield.

Lapuz theorized that the driver might have fallen asleep and was not able to immediately reduce speed.

It took rescuers several hours to finally pull the driver and the woman out of the wreckage using a crane, Lapuz said.

Bulot was confirmed dead right after the accident. His woman companion was buried deep in the wreckage, Lapuz said.

Three more vehicles hit the rear of Bulot's truck, causing heavy traffic for several hours in the Marilao area of the expressway.

Peña wants new strategy vs crime

METRO Manila police chief Romeo Peña has urged the five district directors to come up with new systems of fighting the growing number of car theft and petty crime in the metropolis.

During a command conference on Monday, Peña instructed the local police chiefs to increase police visibility and to improve the foot patrol and the containment ring systems, especially with the coming of the May 14 elections.

Peña noted that car thieves have apparently become more daring. He said that in most of the recent car theft cases, vehicles were forcibly taken from the owners or drivers, instead of the usual cases in which the unattended vehicles are taken from parking lots.

He added that petty crimes, such as cellular phone snatching, picking pockets and robbery and holdup cases, have also been rising in busy parts of Metro Manila, particularly along the university belt.

"We should do something about these," Peña told the five police district directors. "We should always be on alert so we can react accordingly at any given time."

Records at the National Capital Regional Police Office showed that Quezon City had the highest number of car theft cases, with three vehicles getting stolen per day.

But the rise in criminality was blamed on the country's worsening economic situation and not on law enforcement lapses. *Agnes E. Donato*

TOYM 2001 awards launched today

THE TOYM (Ten Outstanding Young Men) 2001 awards will be launched today, with awardee Butch Jimenez of GMA Network Inc. delivering the message.

Jimenez received the local award in 1998 and went on to win the international version of the award in 1999.

All past TOYM winners are invited to attend the launch at the Antonio Molina Hall, Equitable PCI-Bank Tower 2, Makati City, from 2 to 4 p.m.

QC trader killed . . .

(From page A25)

Jaraza said. "Yesterday, he went to settle their plans about their conjugal property."

He said Chua arrived at the house in Balintawak around 11 a.m. Over lunch, he and Yan Su talked about their property.

At around 1 p.m., Elizabeth came home. She heard about the plan to divide the family's property and opposed it vigorously, Jaraza said.

Elizabeth and her father then got into an argument, Jaraza said. Their argument was so emotional that Charlie told his two children, aged 5 and 6, to go to their rooms.

At the height of their confrontation, Chua pulled out a gun and shot his daughter several times in the head, investigators said.

He then pumped three bullets into his wife's head, police added.

Chua also shot Charlie but the son was able to run up to the second floor and get his gun from his room, police said. Charlie returned downstairs and shot it out with his father, police said.

"The son killed his father before the old man could finish him off," Jaraza said.

Truck kills 1 in Manila

By Jerome Aning

A TRAILER truck sowed terror in Intramuros, Manila early Monday night when it plowed through a row of pedicabs, queueing passengers and pedestrians, killing one and injuring two others.

Crispulo Arellano, 24, a resident of Hagonoy, Bulacan, died during surgery at the Philippine General Hospital.

Only one of the injured was identified: Rodolfo Umila Jr., 34, an employee and resident of General Malvar Street, Bangkal, Makati City. The other, a woman pedestrian, suffered only scratches.

The driver, Jacinto Serrano, escaped and is being hunted by policemen. He is facing charges of reckless imprudence resulting in homicide, serious physical injuries and damage to property.

Investigation by SPO1 Mario Jorge of the city traffic police showed that the truck (PRR-214) driven by Serrano, 43, of Cabaybay, Carmona, Cavite, was moving along Andres Bonifacio Drive when it suddenly made a right turn on 16th Street around 7:30 p.m.

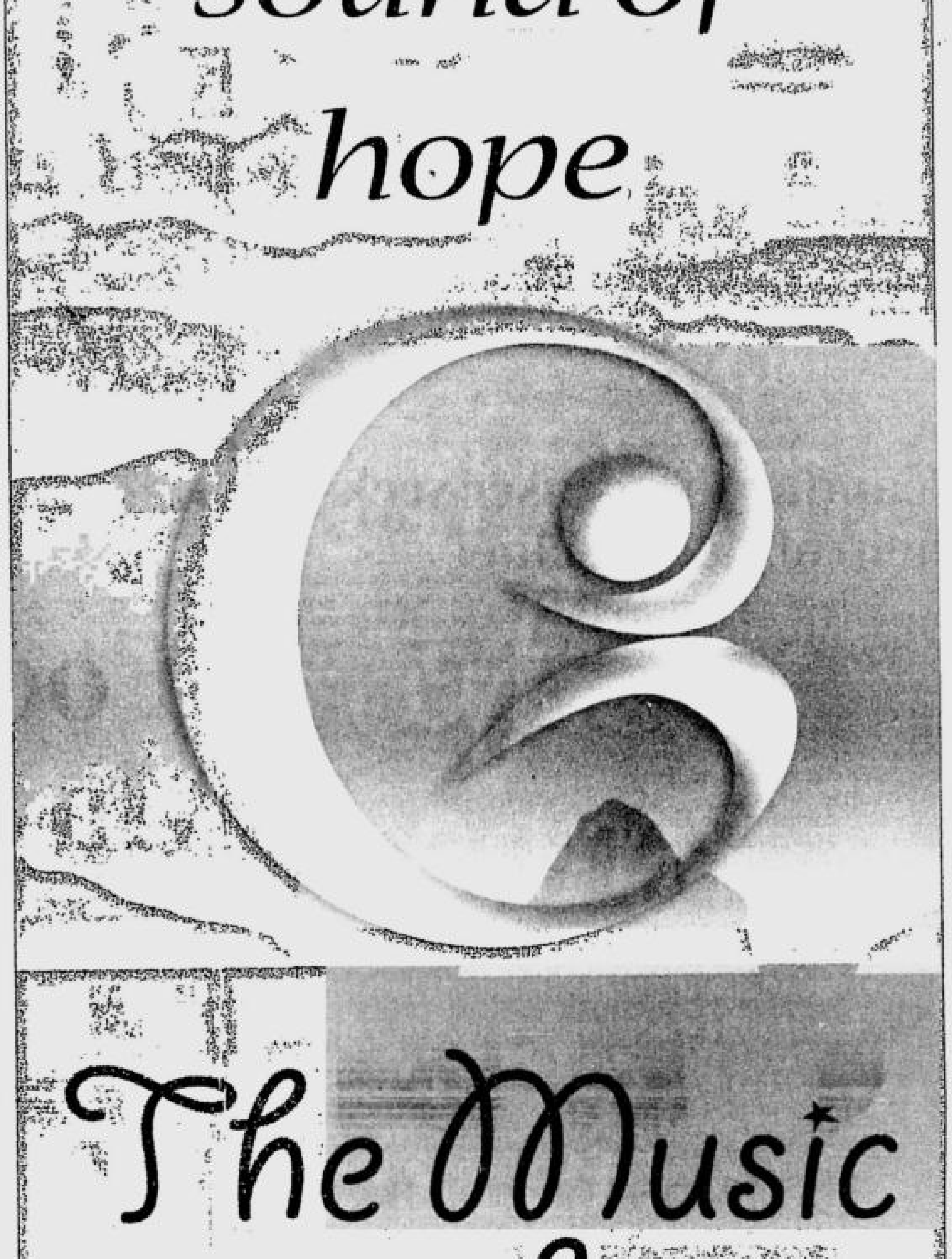
The truck hit several pedicabs and pedestrians and even rammed into a parked jeepney.

Arellano and Umila were pinned between the truck and the crumpled sidecars.

SPO1 Jorge said that when Serrano did not stop the truck, his attention was called by Philippine Ports Authority security guard Nick Anas, who was in front of the Department of Public Works and Highways building.

Anas told police that Serrano stopped and surrendered his driver's license receipt. The driver asked for a while to move his vehicle but he suddenly made a U-turn and sped northwards.

Other motorists brought Arellano and Umila to the PGH, where Arellano died.



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Naked and dead woman puzzles Parañaque police

BY ALCUIN PAPA

POLICE yesterday found the car of the young woman who was raped and killed in Parañaque City over the weekend.

Makati police found the black Mazda sedan (URN-855) of victim Claudine Mabelle Feliciano, 21, on Lapu-Lapu Street, Barangay Bangkal, Makati at about 11:30 a.m. yesterday.

Police are now scouring the car for clues that would lead them to the killers of Feliciano, whose naked body was dumped in a creek in Barangay San Antonio near the Parañaque City Hall on Sunday.

Parañaque investigators have yet to establish a motive for the killing, but they said they were eyeing a love angle where a spurned suitor of Feliciano might have perpetrated the crime.

Earlier, police linked the killing of Feliciano to the aborted abduction of another young woman on Sunday.

Police said the suspects who raped and killed Feliciano might have been the same ones who tried to kidnap Janet Balis, 25, as she was waiting for a ride near the Multinational Village on Imelda Avenue.

Balis told police that at about 3 a.m. Sunday, a car suddenly stopped in front of her. Three men got off and tried to force Balis into the car.

But Balis started shouting for help and called the attention of roving barangay watchmen.

As the watchmen closed in on Balis and her kidnappers, the suspects got on the car and fled, police said.

Balis could not provide police a description of her abductors.

On Sunday at about 9:15 a.m., passersby found the body of Feliciano, a resident of Herrari Drive, Camella, Sucat, Parañaque.

Police said there were strangulation marks on her neck while her hands were bound by a piece of cloth.

Police could not say if the cloth was part of Feliciano's attire.

An autopsy also confirmed the victim was sexually abused. Police were only able to identify the victim on Monday. According to SPO3 Audeo Carino, Feliciano was reported missing on Saturday.

That night she told her parents she was going to meet two of her friends at Ayala Alabang and drove off on her family's black Mazda.

She last contacted her parents a little past 11 p.m. on her cell phone. She said she was just taking one of her friends home to Ayala Alabang.

Candazo's accuser seeks help of justice chief

BY ROCKY NAZARENO

THE WOMAN caddie whom Marikina Rep. Romeo Candazo and his girlfriend reportedly assaulted during a round of golf at an Antipolo course last month has asked for Justice Secretary Hernani Perez's help to ensure that due process be accorded her.

Caddie Perla S. Benorilao, through her lawyer Adriano Lecaros, appealed to Perez in a letter that she be given "due process in this case against a lawmaker ... who has been charged with being a law breaker."

Lecaros said Benorilao made the appeal when the lawyer noted that it has been more than a month since the reported mauling took place at the Forest Hills Golf and Country Club on Feb. 8.

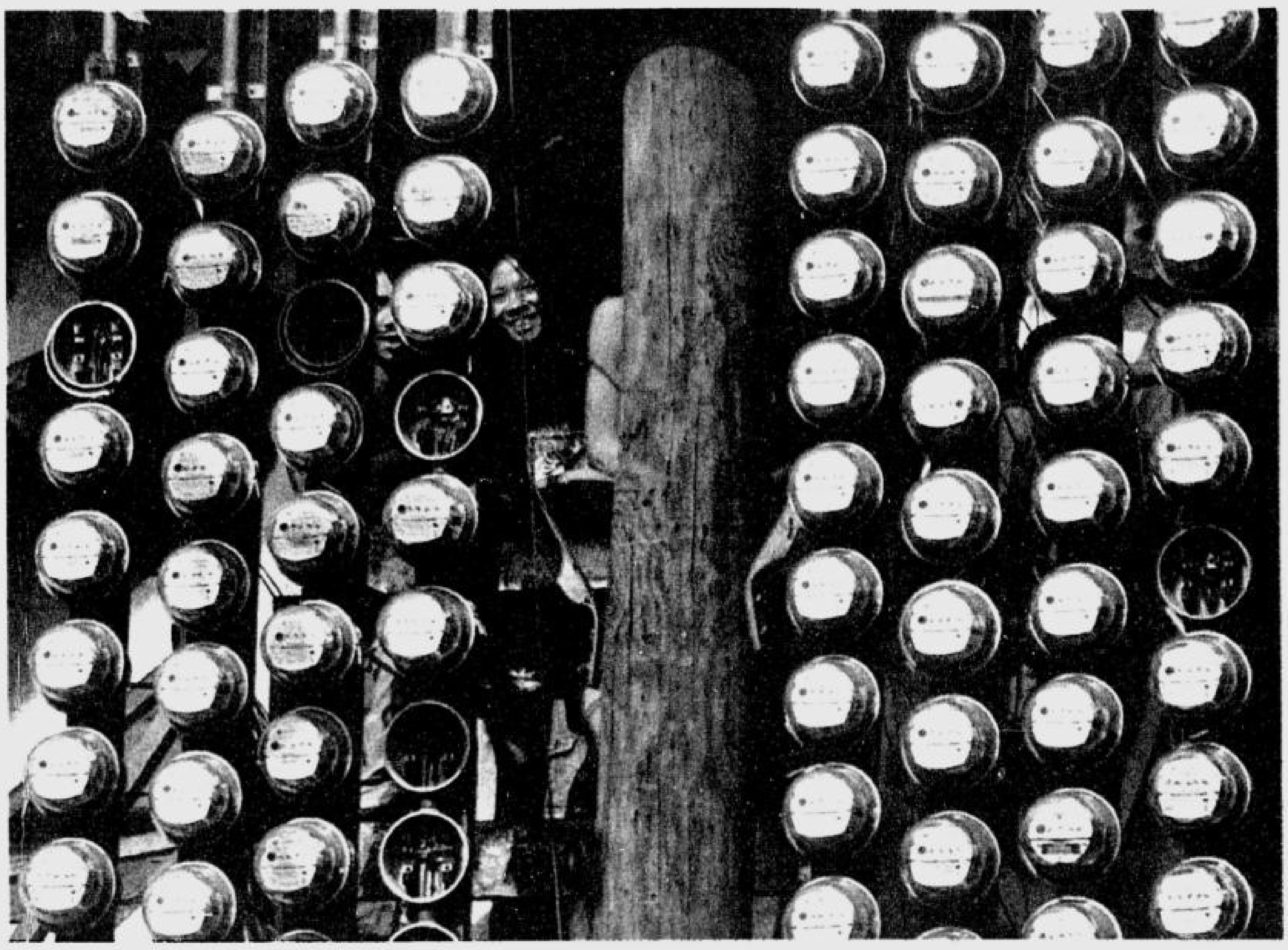
The lawyer also asked Perez to "direct the city prosecutor of Antipolo to inhibit himself from the case," claiming that the prosecutor has not yet acted on the lawsuit.

"Perla even fears the city prosecutor has been cowed into inaction by Congressman Candazo," Lecaros said.

In her complaint, Benorilao alleged that Candazo "thrice attempted to hit her with three golf balls."

She also accused Candazo's girlfriend, Suzette Lopez, of "applying a stranglehold on her neck, kicking her from behind and even hitting her right knee with an iron putter."

"Needless to say, an ordinary citizen like (Benorilao) fears for her life and fears even more the wrath of Congressman Candazo," Lecaros said.



METER METHOD
This array of electric meters is far more orderly than the lives and houses of the people who use them. The meters belong to residents of the poor part that is Smokey Mountain in Quezon City.
DENNIS SABANGAN

'Foot-dragging' leaves Maynilad in deep water

BY JERRY ESPLANADA

IF WORSE comes to worst, Maynilad Water Services Inc. may be forced to give up and return the private utility firm's 25-year concession rights to the government or entirely close down.

Alagad party-list Rep. Diogenes Osabel issued the warning as he also expressed alarm over the government's "foot-dragging" on Maynilad's pending request for an automatic currency exchange rate adjustment (Cera) to recover past currency losses amounting to more than P2.2 billion.

Osabel, an urban poor legislator, warned that "without financial recovery, it would be most difficult for Maynilad to continue to expand its services, especially to the poor who need it most."

"We must come to the rescue of Maynilad before our water service in the metropolis is compromised," said Osabel as he took the cudgels for the financially ailing company.

Osabel and 76 other House members had earlier filed a resolution urging the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) to "expeditiously act on the pending request of Maynilad for an automatic Cera."

The MWSS board had earlier said it had approved Maynilad's request but delayed official action. Malacañang is said to be frowning on the proposed water rate increase, said to be a "politically unpopular move."

Already in place in the monthly billings of other utility firms like the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., Smart, Globe and the Manila Electric Co., the mechanism would allow Maynilad to recover automatically any losses resulting from foreign exchange fluctuations.

The depreciation of the peso against the US dollar has "caused Maynilad's concession fee payment of P4.5 billion from 1997 to 2000 (pegged at P26.50 to $1 in 1997) to rise to P6.7 billion, resulting in a P2.2-billion concession fee loss," Osabel pointed out.

Maynilad said in a press statement its "cash flows are already in bad shape, while our financial losses are too heavy to continue to bear."

"While MWSS board dilly-dallies, the fate of Maynilad's 4.5 million customers hangs in the balance. The MWSS regulatory board members do not seem to appreciate the urgency of Maynilad's petition. Every day the Cera is delayed, Maynilad's woes worsen."

Should Maynilad give up its concession to the MWSS, the firm's customers would "revert to the ancient method of having to queue up for water while water supply will be unclean and unsafe due to the handling of *aguadors*."

If Maynilad does not get its Cera approved this month:

- The firm's capital expenditures will slow down because it will not be able to meet its financial obligations.
- Foreign lending institutions will not approve the $350-million loan which the firm needs to finance future expansion projects.
- The company's P14-billion capital investment program, which covers the installation of 1,000 kilometers of pipes and 200,000 additional water service connections, for 2000 to 2002 will be suspended.
- Other programs, like the replacement of at least 70 km. of 120-year-old pipes and repair of 50,000 leaking pipes, will be put on hold.

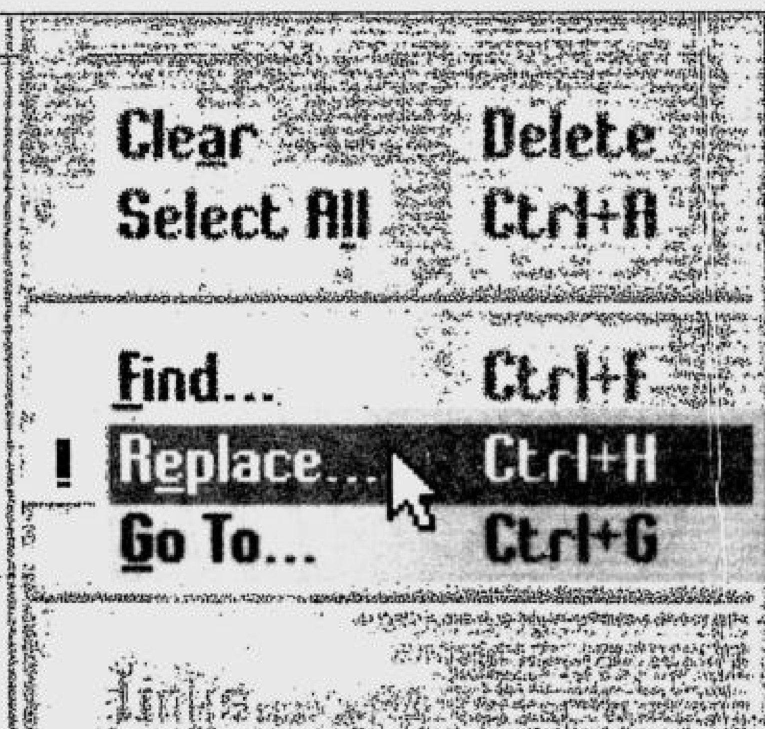
In House resolution No. 1884, filed in December 2000, Osabel also urged the MWSS to allow Maynilad Water to make monthly adjustments "for future foreign exchange fluctuations."

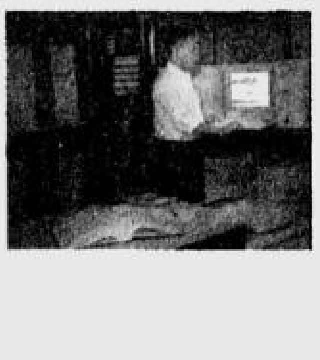
According to Osabel, these were necessary "for the firm to continue the quality service it has been providing to its customers in the West zone."

The legislator noted that "with the takeover of Maynilad Water as concessionaire of the West service area, water became cheaper and more affordable."

The militant party-list group Sanlakas last week picketed the Maynilad and Manila Water offices in Balara, Quezon City to protest the companies' proposed water rate adjustments.

"If allowed by MWSS, water rates will more than double in the next few months," Sanlakas said in a statement. "For instance, an MWSI customer who consumes an average of 30 cubic meters a month will pay between P305.48 and P355.76 under the proposed adjustments."





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Manila to revive city film festival

BY LEAH SALTERIO

MANILA Mayor Lito Atienza will revive the Manila Film Festival next year, after suspending it for two consecutive years.

Atienza on Monday said he suspended the festival in 1999 due to the lack of quality entries. That year, it was GMA Films' entry, Gil Portes' "Saranggola," which won the best picture award.

"Before, when you said there were six quality films, all the six entries were really good ones and it was always a tough fight," Atienza explained.

"The past few years, there was usually only one film which stood out among the entries and that's very disappointing. It was obvious the festival was not encouraging production of better and higher quality films."

The Manila Film Festival is a weeklong film showing of original local movies, held annually on June 24, Araw ng Maynila.

The city government waives the amusement taxes on the movie tickets during the festival week.

"That means P6 to P8 million in taxes which the city gives up," Atienza said. "With that huge amount of money taken from the income of the city, we should really have quality movies during the festival. Otherwise, it's not worth holding it anymore."

Last year, the award-winning films of the late directors Lino Brocka and Ishmael Bernal and other noted filmmakers were screened during the festival, in lieu of new entries.

"Next year, the industry is ready for the resumption of the Manila Film Festival," Atienza said. "Producers will be more aware of the films they will field in the festival. If they want to have a good festival, they better come up with quality movies."

Aside from reviving the Manila Film Festival, Atienza wants to resurrect the Manila Metropolitan Theater, a city landmark.

"To me, it's a symbol of Manila's main feature as a city which is culture," he said. "To revive it, we must inject culture in day-to-day life even in the most depressed communities."

VIEWFINDER

Unconventional approaches to filmmaking

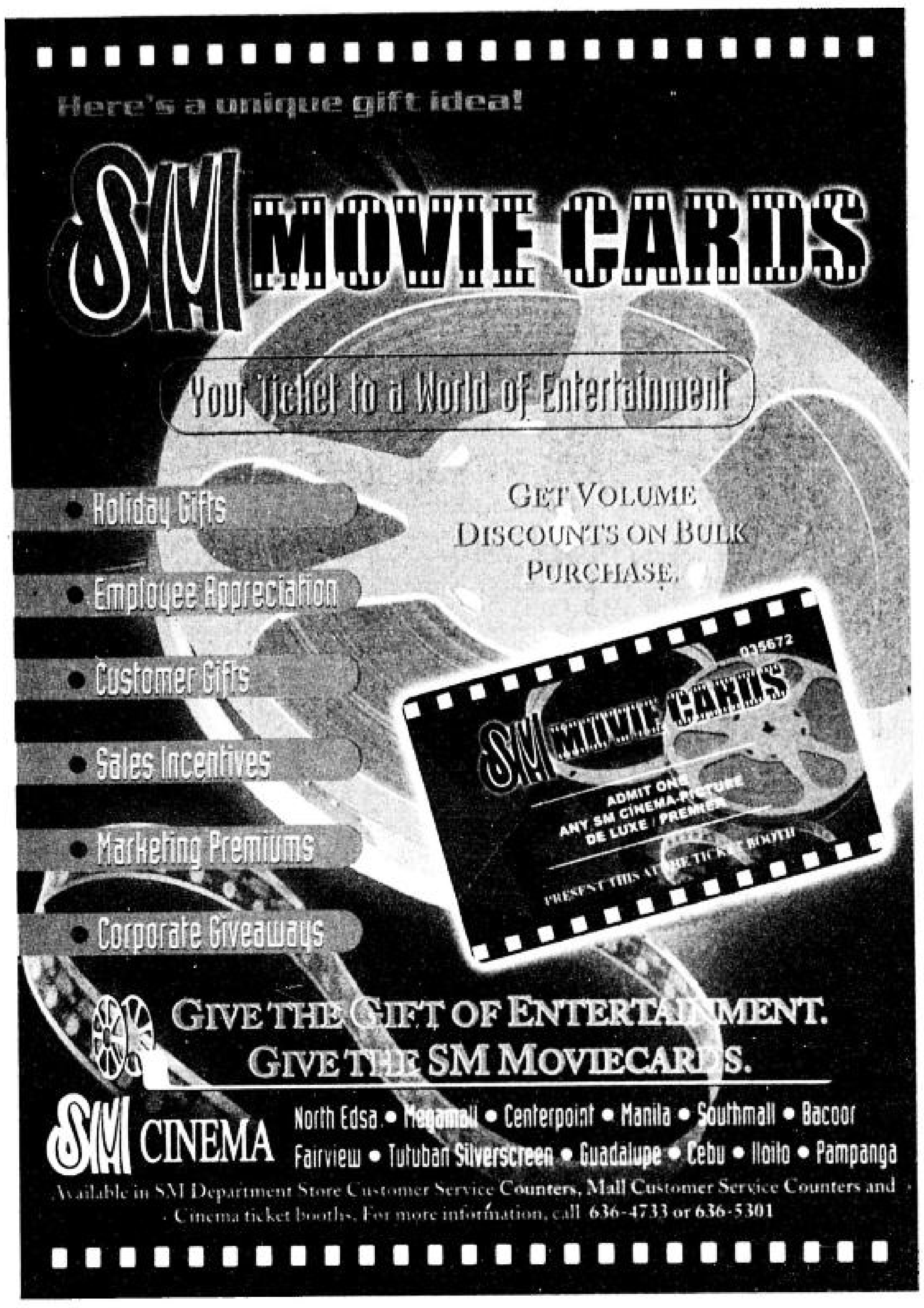
Nestor U. Torre

WHEN **Ben Affleck** and **Matt Damon** first announced their $1-million screenwriting contest for new filmmakers, some people thought they were only engaging in wishful thinking. Still, 7,300 writers took a chance that they were on the level (and had the financing to back up their prize), and joined the tilt.

Well, their faith in the two stars (and Oscar winners for their screenplays for "Good Will Hunting") has turned out to be well-placed.

Last week, Damon and Affleck announced the winner of their "Project

UNCONVENTIONAL/A30



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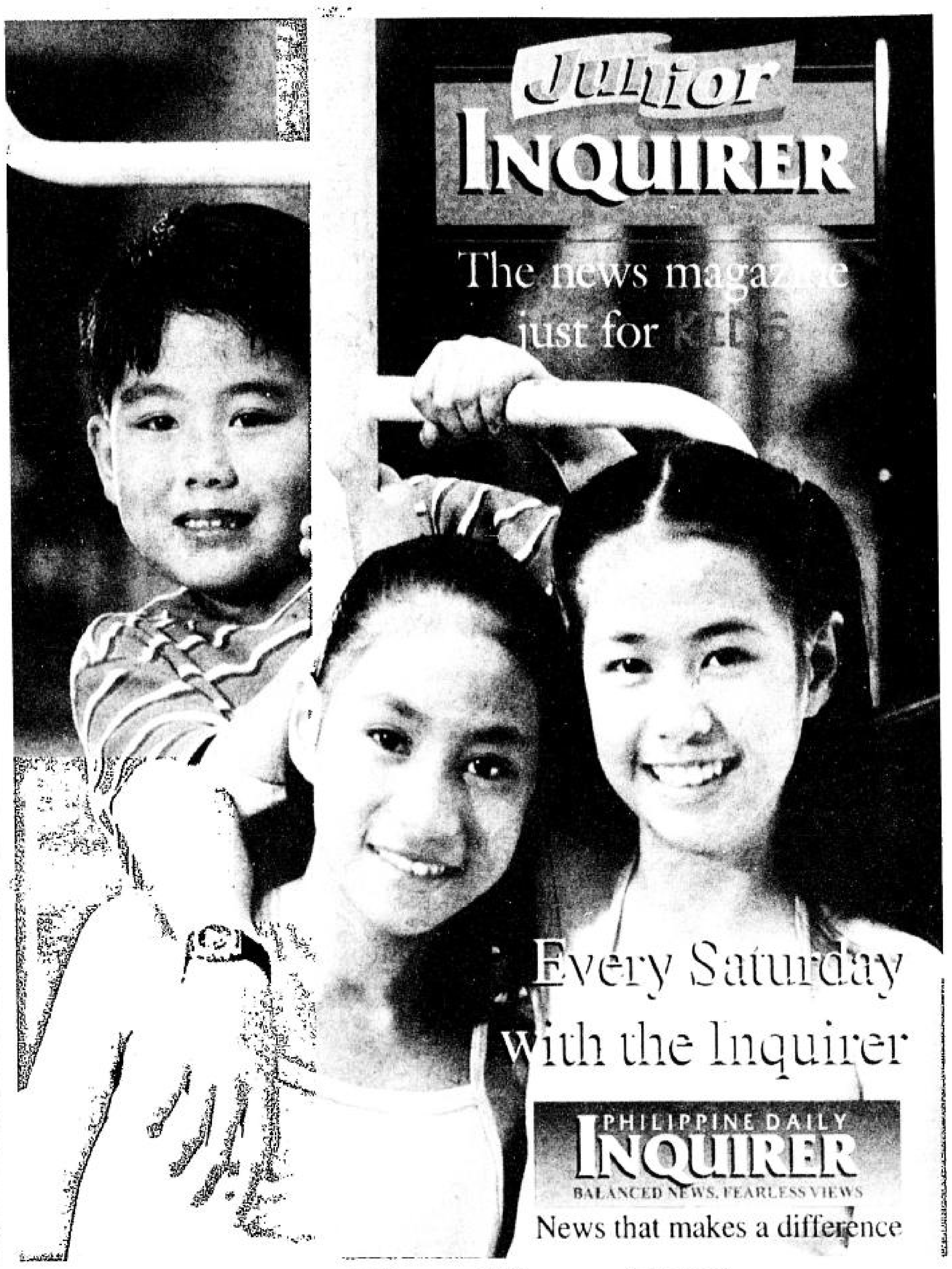

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Unconventional . . .

(From page A29)

Greenlight" competition: unknown writer-director **Pete Jones'** "Stolen Summer."

The screenplay is about two boys trying to understand death, religion and heaven. Along with nine semifinalists, Jones will show one scene from his film at a premiere scheduled this week in Hollywood.

Damon and Affleck will act as executive producers of Jones' movie, to make sure that its $1-million budget is expeditiously spent.

It would be wonderful if this system of finding and financing the best movie projects by new filmmakers could also be tried in the Philippines.

Is there a movie studio, wealthy individual or organization out there that can come up with P3 million to conduct such a search locally?

Decades ago, this was attempted by the Film Fund arm of the Experimental Cinema of the Philippines, which resulted in the selection and production of movies like "Oro, Plata, Mata," "Soltero" and "Misteryo sa Tuwa," but the project was stopped after some years. It's time to revive it! Affleck and Damon have shown the way.

Another new and unconventional approach to filmmaking that's more exotic and even self-serving is the "role-auctioning" gambit called "Who Wants to Be A Movie Star." Put very simply, this online auction makes it possible for prospective movie actors with money to literally buy screen stardom (or a cameo role, if they only have a few thousand bucks)!

UNCONVENTIONAL/A31

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4	DOLBY SURROUND	DRACULA 2000
5	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	LIVE SHOW
6	DOLBY SURROUND	OOPS TEKA LANG
7	DOLBY SURROUND	TOO MUCH FLESH
8	DOLBY SURROUND	MS. CONGENIALITY

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1	DOLBY SURROUND	OOPS TEKA LANG
2	DOLBY SURROUND	TOROTOT
3	DTS	MS. CONGENIALITY
4	DOLBY SURROUND	PURPLE STORM
5	DOLBY DIGITAL	WEDDING PLANNER
6	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	TOO MUCH FLESH
7	DOLBY SURROUND	DRACULA 2000
8	DOLBY SURROUND	HANNIBAL
9	DOLBY SURROUND	LIVE SHOW
10	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 9350749

1	DOLBY SURROUND	PURPLE STORM
2	DOLBY SURROUND	TOROTOT
3	DOLBY SURROUND	HANNIBAL
4	DOLBY DIGITAL	MS. CONGENIALITY
5	DOLBY SURROUND	LIVE SHOW
6	DOLBY SURROUND	OOPS TEKA LANG
7	DOLBY DIGITAL	WEDDING PLANNER
8	DOLBY SURROUND	DRACULA 2000
9	DOLBY SURROUND	OOPS TEKA LANG
10	DOLBY SURROUND	ALMOST FAMOUS
11	DOLBY SURROUND	TOO MUCH FLESH
12	DOLBY SURROUND	KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY

SM CITY MANILA 9239240

1	DOLBY DIGITAL	MS. CONGENIALITY
2	DOLBY DIGITAL	DRACULA 2000
3	DOLBY SURROUND	PURPLE STORM
4	DOLBY SURROUND	WEDDING PLANNER
5	DOLBY DIGITAL	BILLY ELLIOT
6	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	HANNIBAL
7	DOLBY SURROUND	TOROTOT
8	DOLBY SURROUND	TOO MUCH FLESH
9	DOLBY SURROUND	OOPS TEKA LANG
10	DOLBY SURROUND	KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY
11	DOLBY SURROUND	LIVE SHOW
12	DOLBY SURROUND	CAST AWAY

GUADALUPE COMM'L CTR 8820950

1	ULTRA SURROUND	LIVE SHOW
2	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	OOPS TEKA LANG
3	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	TOROTOT

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1	DOLBY DIGITAL	MS. CONGENIALITY
2	DOLBY SURROUND	PURPLE STORM
3	DOLBY DIGITAL	WEDDING PLANNER
4	DTS	OOPS TEKA LANG
5	DOLBY SURROUND	BILLY ELLIOT
6	DOLBY SURROUND	DRACULA 2000
7	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
8	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
9	DOLBY SURROUND	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
10	DOLBY SURROUND	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
11	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
12	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION

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1	DOLBY SURROUND	KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY
2	DOLBY SURROUND	OOPS TEKA LANG
3	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	LIVE SHOW
4	DOLBY SURROUND	DRACULA 2000
5	DOLBY SURROUND	BILLY ELLIOT
6	DOLBY SURROUND	PURPLE STORM
7	DTS	MS. CONGENIALITY
8	DOLBY DIGITAL	WEDDING PLANNER
9	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	TOROTOT
10	DOLBY SURROUND	HOSTAGE
11	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	TOO MUCH FLESH
12	DOLBY SURROUND	HANNIBAL

SM SOUTHMALL 8066888 • 8066782

1	ULTRA SURROUND	BILLY ELLIOT
2	ULTRA SURROUND	OOPS TEKA LANG
3	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	MS. CONGENIALITY
4	ULTRA SURROUND	PURPLE STORM
5	ULTRA SURROUND	TOROTOT
6	ULTRA SURROUND	LIVE SHOW
7	ULTRA SURROUND	OOPS TEKA LANG
8	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	WEDDING PLANNER
9	ULTRA SURROUND	TOO MUCH FLESH
10	ULTRA SURROUND	DRACULA 2000

TUTUBAN CENTER 2514302

1	ULTRA SURROUND	WEDDING PLANNER
2	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY
3	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	OOPS TEKA LANG
4	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	TOROTOT

SM CEBU 2313876

1	DOLBY SURROUND	WHAT WOMEN WANT
2	ULTRA SURROUND	SNATCH
3	ULTRA SURROUND	WOMAN ON TOP
4	ULTRA SURROUND	WAY OF THE GUN
5	ULTRA SURROUND	CONTENDER
6	ULTRA SURROUND	HAPLOS
7	DOLBY SURROUND	OOPS TEKA LANG

SM ILOILO 3208422

1	ULTRA SURROUND	WHAT WOMEN WANT
2	ULTRA SURROUND	NURSE BETTY
3	ULTRA SURROUND	SNATCH
4	ULTRA SURROUND	PAY IT FORWARD
5	ULTRA SURROUND	HAPLOS
6	ULTRA SURROUND	CONTENDER
7	ULTRA SURROUND	OOPS TEKA LANG
8	ULTRA SURROUND	HANNIBAL

SM PAMPANGA 7128015

1	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	DRACULA 2000
2	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	ALMOST FAMOUS
3	DOLBY SURROUND	OOPS TEKA LANG
4	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	LIVE SHOW
5	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	NURSE BETTY
6	DOLBY SURROUND	OOPS TEKA LANG

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GLORIETTA 1 formerly QUAD

1 OOPS, TEKA LANG ... DISKARTE KO TO!
2 WEDDING PLANNER
3 TOO MUCH FLESH
4 MS. CONGENIALITY

GLORIETTA 4 All Digital Sound

1 DRACULA 2000 In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
2 WEDDIONG PLANNER In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
3 WEDDIONG PLANNER THX In DSD/SDDS/DTS DIGITAL SOUND
4 CHUCK & BUCK (Phil. Premiere) In DTS DIGITAL SOUND Art Film
5 HANNIBAL In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
6 MS. CONGENIALITY In DTS/SDDS DIGITAL SOUND
7 BILLY ELLIOT In DTS DIGITAL SOUND

GREENBELT

1 BILLY ELLIOT In DOLBY STEREO DIGITAL SOUND
2 WEDDING PLANNER In SONY DYNAMIC DIGITAL SOUND
3 MS. CONGENIALITY In DOLBY STEREO DIGITAL SOUND
4 Onstage

ALABANG TOWN CENTER

1 WEDDING PLANNER THX In DSD/SDDS DIGITAL SOUND
2 BILLY ELLIOT In DSD DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
3 MS. CONGENIALITY In DTS DIGITAL SOUND
4 HANNIBAL In DTS DIGITAL SOUND
5 OOPS, TEKA LANG... DISKARTE KO TO! In DTS DIGITAL SOUND

MMTA
METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION

MOVIE GUIDE
NOW SHOWING

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72
1 (DDS) WEDDING PLANNER
2 (SDDS) PURPLE STORM
3 (DTS) MS. CONGENIALITY
4 GOLD (DTS) HANNIBAL
5 GOLD (DOLBY) DRACULA 2000
6 GOLD (SDDS) BILLY ELLIOT
7 GOLD (DOLBY) WEDDING PLANNER
8 OOPS TEKA LANG
9 OOPS TEKA LANG
10 TOROTOT

Pearl Plaza Cinemas
(Parañaque) tel. 853.4486
1 OOPS TEKA LANG
2 TOROTOT
3 (DTS)
4
5
6 (DTS)
Golden Pearl THX

Masagana CINEMAX 1-2 & 3
(Kalaw) tel 536.4315
1 (DOLBY) OOPS TEKA LANG
2 (DTS)
3 TOROTOT

Masagana CINEMA 1 2 & 3
(Pasay) tel 831.6603
1 OOPS TEKA LANG
2 TOROTOT
3 LIVE SHOW

starmall Movies
(Shaw Blvd.) tel 724.4986
1 OOPS TEKA LANG
2 LIVE SHOW
3 TOROTOT
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL) PURPLE STORM
5 KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY

Metropolis
(Alabang) tel 543.4001
1 OOPS TEKA LANG
2 TOROTOT
3 OOPS TEKA LANG
4 LIVE SHOW
5 WEDDING PLANNER
6 RESERVE
7 KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY
8 TOO MUCH FLESH

Uniwide Metromall
(Las Piñas) tel. 873.5606 loc. 1074
WATCH 3 MOVIE FOR ONLY P30.00
1
2 VIRGIN WIFE
3 HAYOP SA GANDA
4 SPACE COWBOY
5 -
6

Uniwide Coastal Mall
(Parañaque) tel 879.0001 loc. 2152
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1 VIRGIN WIFE
2 SPACE COWBOY
3 WONDER BOY
4

Center Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 VITAL PART
2 TUSONG TWOSOME

FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL, INC.
tel 930.9515
1
2 OOPS TEKA LANG
3 TOROTOT

Spring
(Libertad, Pasay City) tel 831.7864
1 OOPS TEKA LANG
A TOROTOT

JC Cinema
(Parañaque) tel 825.8626
1 OOPS TEKA LANG
3

GOTESCO CINEMA

City
(Manila) tel 734.8588
1 (DOLBY) OOPS TEKA LANG
2 TOO MUCH FLESH
3 KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY
4 LIVE SHOW
5 PURPLE STORM
6 TOROTOT
7 (DTS) MS. CONGENIALITY
8 (SDDS) WEDDING PLANNER
9 (DOLBY) DRACULA 2000

Caloocan
tel 362.3508
2 LIVE SHOW
3 TOROTOT
4 OOPS TEKA LANG
5
6

Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781
1 OOPS TEKA LANG
2 LIVE SHOW
3 OOPS TEKA LANG
4 (SDDS) WEDDING PLANNER
5 TOROTOT
6 (DOLBY) HOSTAGE
7 (DTS) KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY
8 TOO MUCH FLESH
9 PURPLE STORM

Commonwealth
tel 951.0083
1 (DTS) WEDDING PLANNER
2 OOPS TEKA LANG
3 TOROTOT
4 KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY
5 (SDDS) OOPS TEKA LANG
6 LIVE SHOW
7 (DOLBY) PURPLE STORM
8 TOO MUCH FLESH

Ortigas
tel 656.6795
1 LIVE SHOW
2 KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY
3 (DTS) WEDDING PLANNER
4 OOPS TEKA LANG
5 (SDDS) TOROTOT
6 (DOLBY) TOO MUCH FLESH
7 (DOLBY) OOPS TEKA LANG

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470
1 OOPS TEKA LANG

Sampaquita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888
1 OOPS TEKA LANG

Dilson
(Manila) tel 734.7724
Dilson LIVE SHOW
Lords TOO MUCH FLESH
Jennet LIVE SHOW

MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856
1 TOROTOT
2 OOPS TEKA LANG
3 TOO MUCH FLESH
4 LIVE SHOW

Prima
(Pasig) tel 641.1215
1
3 OOPS TEKA LANG

Super Cinerama
(Manila) tel 733.4226 or 733.4238
1 OOPS TEKA LANG
2 DRACULA 2000
3 WEDDING PLANNER
4 LIVE SHOW
5 KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY

Divisoria Mall
(Manila) tel 244.4560 or 244.4619
1 OOPS TEKA LANG
2 OOPS TEKA LANG
3 TOROTOT
4 PURPLE STORM
5 KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY
6 LIVE SHOW

Baclaran LRT Cinema
tel 512.0115 or 512.0116
1 OOPS TEKA LANG
2 TOROTOT
3 KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
tel (049) 534.2185 / 534.2198
1 OOPS TEKA LANG
2 KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY
3 (DTS) MS. CONGENIALITY

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 OOPS TEKA LANG
2 (DTS) ALMOST FAMOUS
3 (DOLBY) MS. CONGENIALITY
4 DRACULA 2000

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 (SDDS) KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY
2 TOO MUCH FLESH
3 TOROTOT
4 (DTS) OOPS TEKA LANG

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 (DOLBY) OOPS TEKA LANG
2 LIVE SHOW
3 (DTS) MS. CONGENIALITY
4 KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY
5 OBJECT OF OBSESSION

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883
1 OOPS TEKA LANG
2 LIVE SHOW
3 MS. CONGENIALITY

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 536.5101
1 OOPS TEKA LANG
2 LIVE SHOW
3 MS. CONGENIALITY

Olivarez Tagaytay
tel (046) 413.0311
1 KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY
2 OOPS TEKA LANG
3 LIVE SHOW

Morales Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.9736
1 MS. CONGENIALITY
2 OOPS TEKA LANG
3 DEMON GATE

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376
1 OOPS TEKA LANG
2 LIVE SHOW
3 TOROTOT
4 KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 243.2783
1 (DTS) OOPS TEKA LANG
2 (DTS) LIVE SHOW

Fourstep
(Cavite) tel (046) 416.2385
1 OOPS TEKA LANG

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657
1 BLONDIE
2 OOPS TEKA LANG
3 LIVE SHOW

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 LIVE SHOW
2 HANNIBAL
3 OOPS TEKA LANG
4 KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY

Berma
tel 879.2168
1
2

CitiMall
(Parañaque) tel 820.7269
1 RESERVE
2 LIVE SHOW
3 MS. CONGENIALITY
4 OOPS TEKA LANG

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 (DOLBY) MS. CONGENIALITY
2 OOPS TEKA LANG
3
4 (DTS) ALMOST FAMOUS

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THX DOLBY dts SDDS

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❶ WEDDING PLANNER
❷ MS. CONGENIALITY
❸ OOPS! TEKA LANG. DISKARTE KO 'TO
❹ TOO MUCH FLESH
❺ PURPLE STORM
❻ BILLY ELLIOT
❼ DRACULA 2000

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❶ WEDDING PLANNER
❷ LIVE SHOW
❸ TOO MUCH FLESH
❹ MS. CONGENIALITY
❺ OOPS! TEKA LANG. DISKARTE KO 'TO
❻ TOROTOT

BACOLOD (034)441-0453

❶ HANNIBAL
❷ WOMAN ON TOP
❸ DRACULA 2000
❹ THE FAMILY MAN
❺ KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY
❻ WAY OF THE GUN

DOLBY dts SDDS

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

ARANETA CENTER THEATERS 911-3101	
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1	KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	LIVE SHOW
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS)	MS. CONGENIALITY
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	DRACULA 2000
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	HANNIBAL
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	ALMOST FAMOUS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7 (DOLBY)	HOSTAGE
FARMERS PLAZA-1 (DOLBY)	MS. CONGENIALITY
FARMERS PLAZA-2 (DOLBY)	KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY
FIESTA CARNIVAL	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
NEW FRONTIER	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	TOROTOT
MIRAMAR	KANGKONG / VIVID
ODEON	OOPS TEKA LANG
ODEON-2	KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY
ROBEN	TOROTOT
TANDEM-1	SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS
TANDEM-2	IKA - 7 GLORYA
TIMES	HIGHLANDER / LOST SOUL
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	ANAK NG YAKUSA
ACT-2	ANAK NG KANO
ACT-3	ALIPIN NG TUKSO
ACT-4	TURN ON
CORONET-2	OOPS TEKA LANG
QUEZON-1	HANIBAL
REMAR	OOPS TEKA LANG
REMAR-2	TOROTOT
CUBAO	
OCEAN SUPERAMA	LIVE SHOW
OCEAN CINEMA-A	KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY
OCEAN CINEMA-B	BLONDIE
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	WEDDING PLANNER
CINEMA-2	TOO MUCH FLESH
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-54091 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	HOSTAGE
CINEMA-2	KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY
CINEMA-3	LIVE SHOW
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	CAST AWAY
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	OBJECT OF OBSESSION
CINEMA-6	TUSONG TWOSOME
CINEMA-7	BLONDIE
CINEMA-8	TUHOG
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	HANNIBAL
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	MS. CONGENIALITY
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	ALMOST FAMOUS
CINEMA-12	DRACULA 2000
CINEMA-14	HOSTAGE
CINEMA-15	KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY
LORES	
CINEMA-2	KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY
CINEMA-3	BLONDIE
POWER PLANT CINEMA	
CINEMA-1	BILLY ELLIOT
CINEMA-2	MS. CONGENIALITY
CINEMA-3	WEDDING PLANNER
CINEMA-4	DRACULA 2000
CINEMA-5	HANNIBAL
CINEMA-6	WEDDING PLANNER

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Jennifer Lopez
Matthew McConaughey
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Watch out for the 4th issue of Pelikula: A Journal of Philippine Cinema featuring WOMEN IN CINEMA coming out in March!

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ENTERTAINMENT

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

Unconventional . . .

(From page A29)

If there's vanity publishing in the book trade, now there's vanity acting in the movies.

The guys who thought this concept up are screenwriter **Adam Rifkin** ("Mouse Hunt") and director **Tony Markes**.

They hope to raise a cool million bucks to finance their movie, the script of which will depend on the personalities (if not talents) of the people who buy into the project.

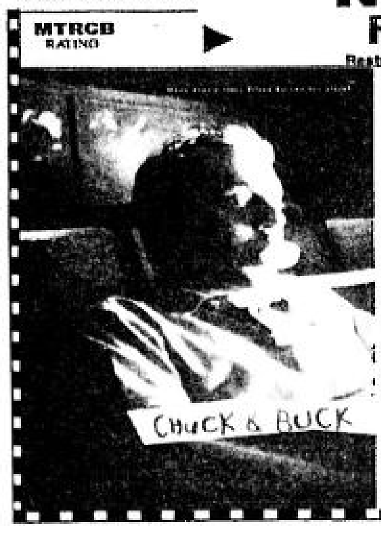
They're confident that there are more than enough stardom-struck people out there to enable them to meet if not exceed their financial target.

Again, can this be tried in the Philippines? Well, it already has! From time to time, we do get vanity productions that are financed, if not by the star himself or herself, then by the star's parentsIK—or, more often, his or her sugar daddies or mommies!

POWER PLANT
CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41 DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

1 BILLY ELLIOT - P 13 1:30, 3:50, 6:10, 8:30	2 MISS CONGENIALITY - G 12:35, 3:00, 5:25, 7:50, 10:15	3 WEDDING PLANNER - P 13 1:20, 3:30, 5:40, 7:50, 10:00
4 DRACULA 2000 - R 18 1:20, 3:30, 5:40, 7:50, 10:00	5 HANNIBAL - R 11:40, 2:15, 4:50, 7:25, 10:00	6 WEDDING PLANNER - P 13 12:20, 2:30, 4:40, 6:50, 9:00

MATINEE P80.00 - FREE SEATING - SCREENINGS BEFORE 5 PM - MON. TO FRI.



AYALA CINEMAS
ARTFILM · GLORIETTA 4 Art Film
NOW SHOWING
MTRCB RATING ▶ R Restricted | Strictly for ADULTS No one below 18 yrs. may be admitted.
PHILIPPINE PREMIERE
CHUCK & BUCK
Hysterical Black Comedy With Heart of Gold

An infantile 27-year-old becomes fixated on his childhood best friend, and his overheated efforts to renew the relationship completely upend his buddy's fast-track life in Chuck & Buck, a dark comedy which would be shown ONLY at the ARTFILM of Glorietta 4 is directed by acclaimed filmmaker Miguel Arteta (Star Maps). Sharp, funny and sensitive, Chuck & Buck takes a fresh look at themes of friendship, innocence, sexuality and conformity.

WINNER
Best Writing @ 2000 Seattle International Film Festival;
Acting Prize (White) @ 26th Annual Deauxville Festival of American Cinema;
Best Supporting Actress (Ontiveros) @ 2000 National Board of Review.

GOLDEN GLOBE WINNER!
BEST PICTURE
MUSICAL
BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS-Kate Hudson
from the writer/director of Jerry Maguire
ALMOST FAMOUS

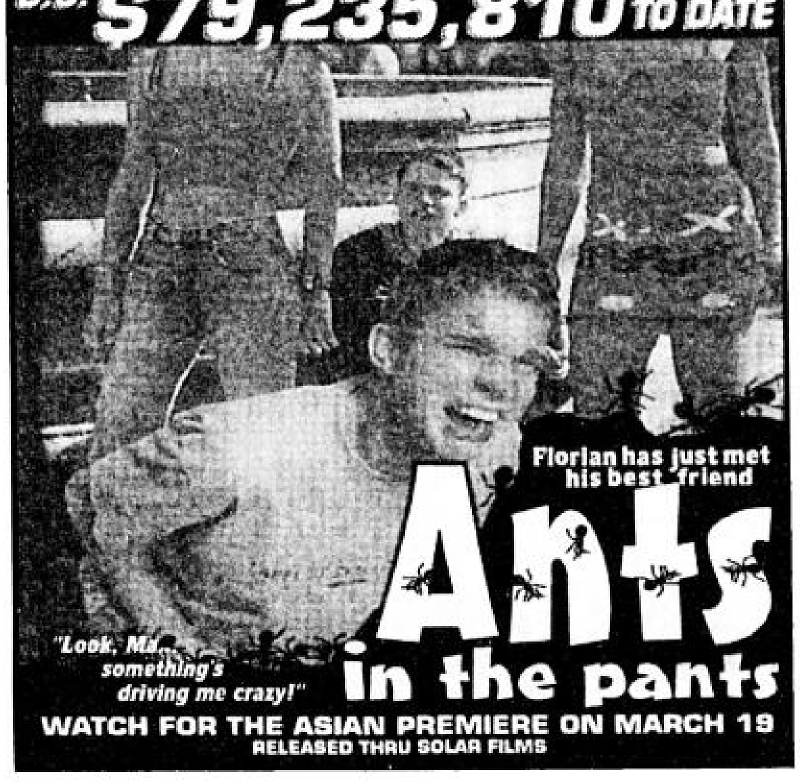
MTRCB RATING ▶ R Restricted | Strictly for ADULTS No one below 18 yrs. may be admitted.
Must-see film on sex & rock 'n roll
'Almost Famous' Now Showing

In the tradition of Cameron Crowe's Oscar-nominated JERRY MAGUIRE, ALMOST FAMOUS is a coming-of-age tale that is intelligent, well-written and infused with humor in unlikely places.

Inspired by the real-life experiences of the Academy Award nominee writer/director, ALMOST FAMOUS is the story of an unabashed rock 'n roll music fan tasked to write for Rolling Stone magazine in the '70s at age 15. As he joins the band Stillwater on tour, he befriends the band members and their groupies, and grows up, losing his virginity along the way.

ALMOST FAMOUS won a Golden Globe BEST PICTURE Award (Musical/Comedy), and 4 Academy Award nominations for Original Screenplay, Editing, and Supporting Actress for Kate Hudson and Frances McDormand. The movie also stars Billy Crudup, Jason Lee, Patrick Fugit, Anna Paquin and Fairuza Balk.

Embraced by critics, ALMOST FAMOUS is described as "absolutely fabulous," "honest and brilliant," "bighearted and bittersweet," and "filled with splendid performances."


Florian has just met his best friend
Ants in the pants
"Look, Ma... something's driving me crazy!"

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WATCH FOR THE ASIAN PREMIERE ON MARCH 19
RELEASED THRU SOLAR FILMS

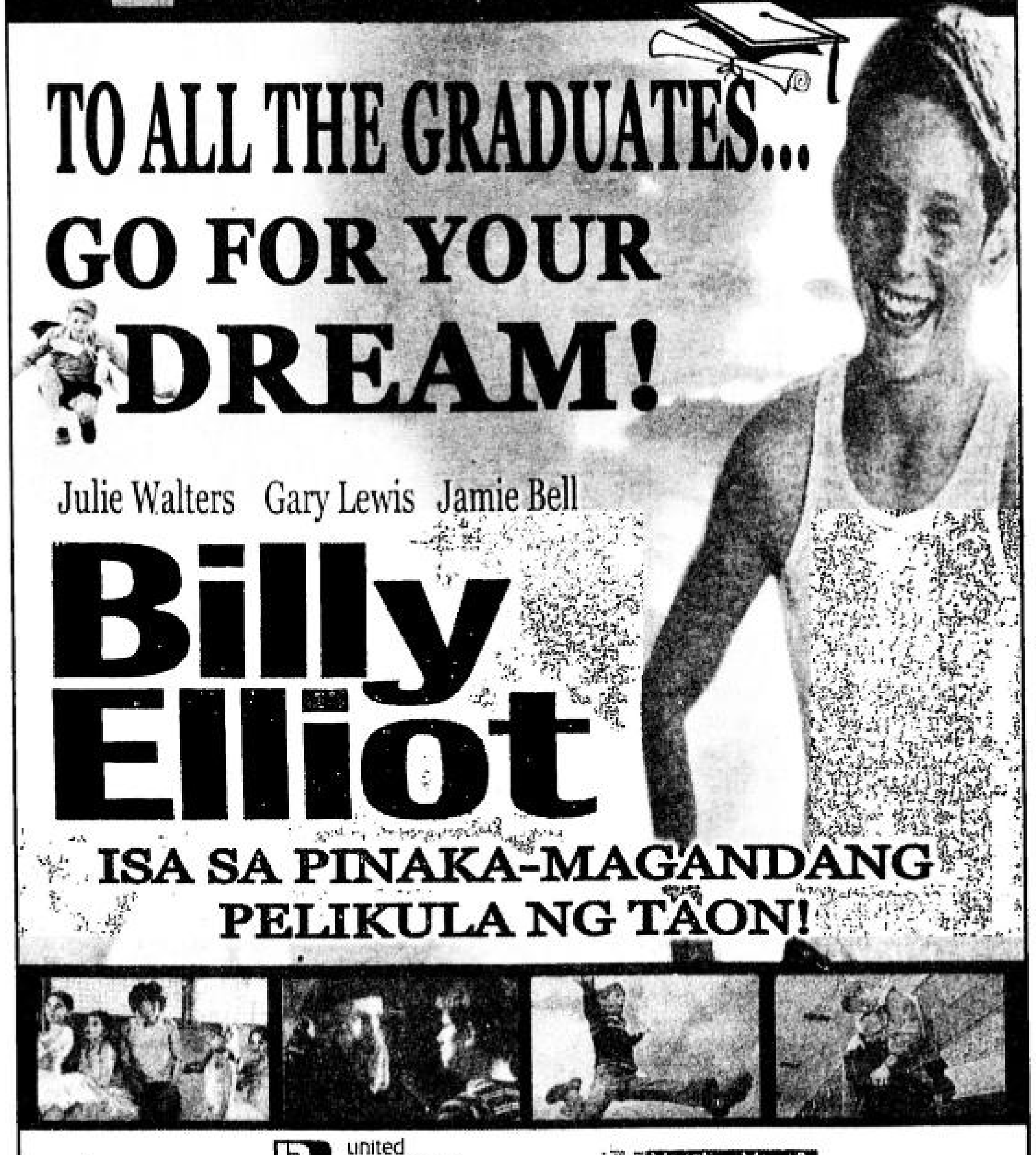
STARRING DANIEL WU JOAN CHEN
PURPLE STORM

OPENS TODAY MTRCB ▶ R-18 Strictly for Adults Only
FROM THE DIRECTOR OF JACKIE CHAN'S UPCOMING FILM " ACCIDENTAL SPY "
WINNER 6 INTERNATIONAL AWARDS
BEST ACTION CHOREOGRAPHY
BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY
BEST ART DIRECTION
BEST COSTUME & MAKEUP DESIGN
BEST FILM EDITING
BEST SOUND DESIGN
A JACKIE CHAN AND MEDIA ASIA FILMS JOINT PRODUCTION RELEASED THRU SOLAR FILMS

Sandra Bullock Michael Caine Benjamin Bratt and Candice Bergen
SHE'S GOT A KILLER TO CATCH...
RIGHT AFTER THE SWIMSUIT COMPETITION.
Miss Congeniality
mossimo

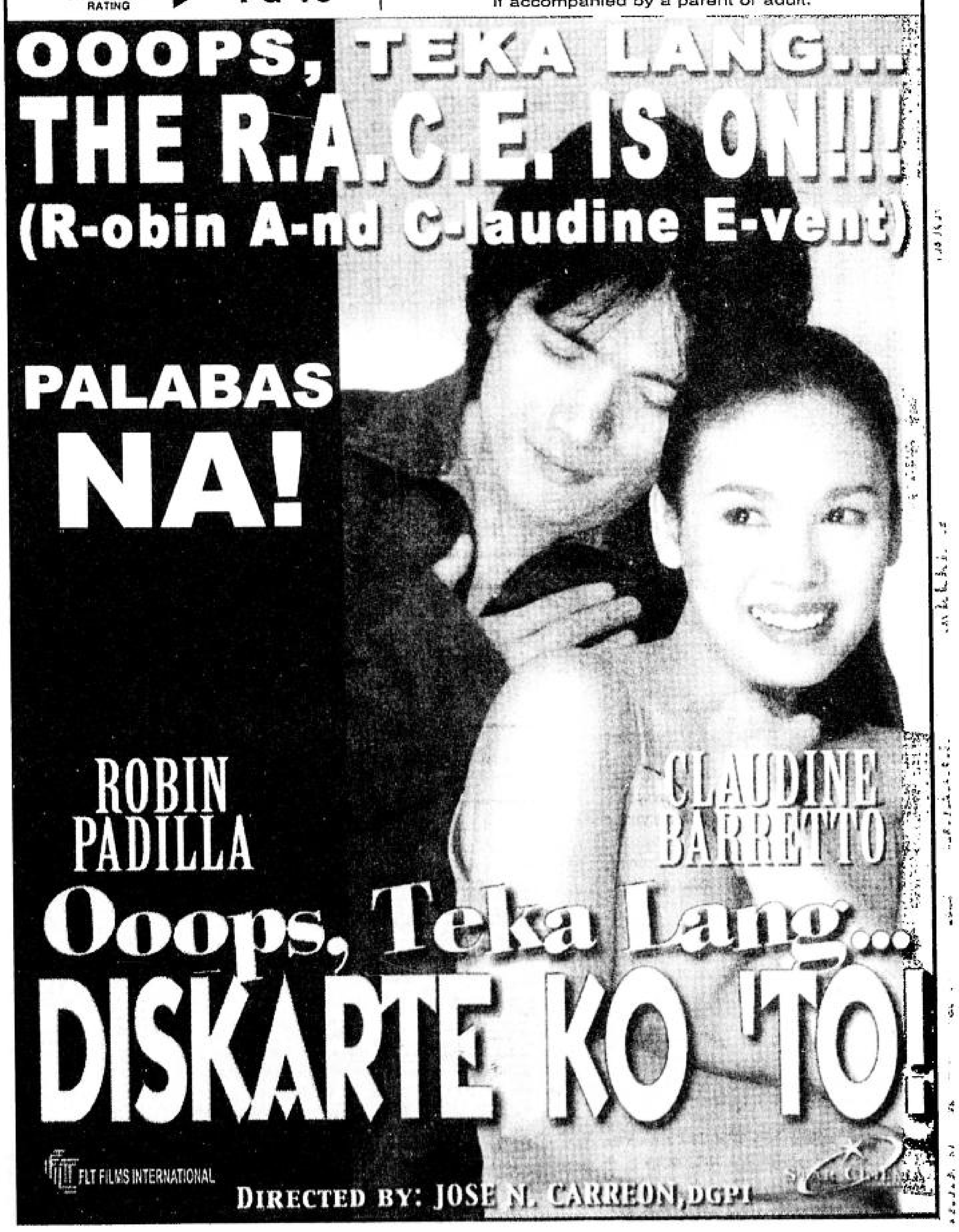
SECOND WEEK!
MTRCB ▶ GP | All ages admitted

MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 | Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult.
OSCAR NOMINEE
BEST DIRECTOR - Stephen Daldry
BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS - Julie Walters
SCREENPLAY: ORIGINAL - Lee Hall
GOLDEN GLOBE NOMINEE
BEST PICTURE
BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS - Julie Walters


TO ALL THE GRADUATES...
GO FOR YOUR DREAM!
Julie Walters Gary Lewis Jamie Bell
Billy Elliot
ISA SA PINAKA-MAGANDANG PELIKULA NG TAON!

united international pictures
VIVA INTERNATIONAL PICTURES
NOW SHOWING!

MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 | Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult.


OOOPS, TEKA LANG...
THE R.A.C.E. IS ON!!!
(R-obin A-nd C-laudine E-vent)
PALABAS NA!
ROBIN PADILLA
CLAUDINE BARRETTO
Ooops, Teka Lang...
DISKARTE KO 'TO!
FLT FILMS INTERNATIONAL
DIRECTED BY: JOSE N. CARREON, DGPI

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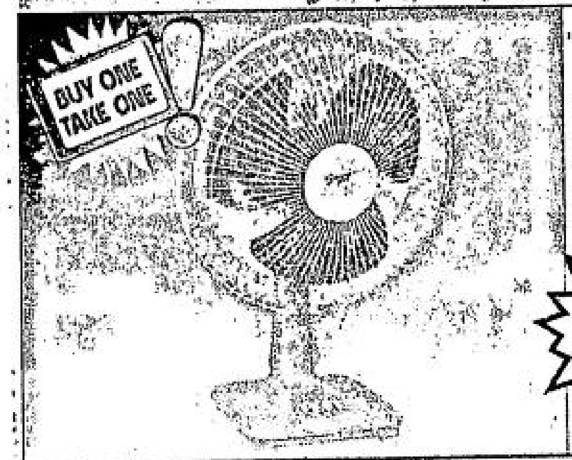
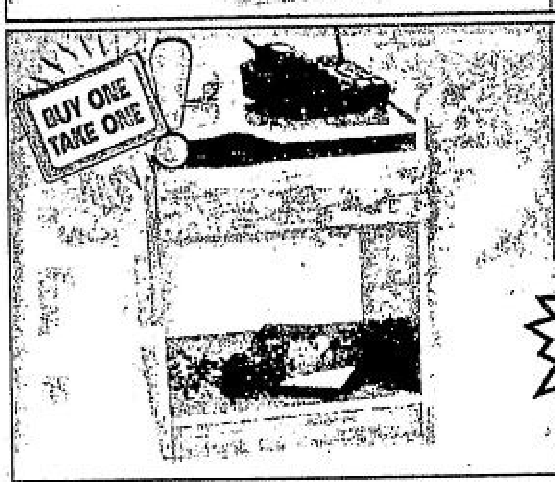

BUY ONE TAKE ONE!

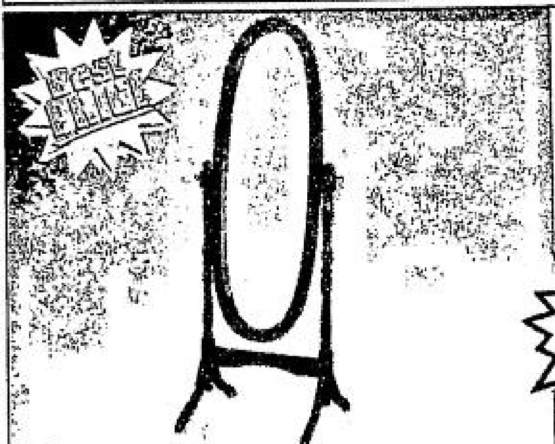
UNION Desk Fan 16"
Summer Breeze
16" Plastic Blade,
220 Volts/AC

P919


BUY ONE TAKE ONE!

NB Bedside Table
W153/4xD153/4xH19"

P799

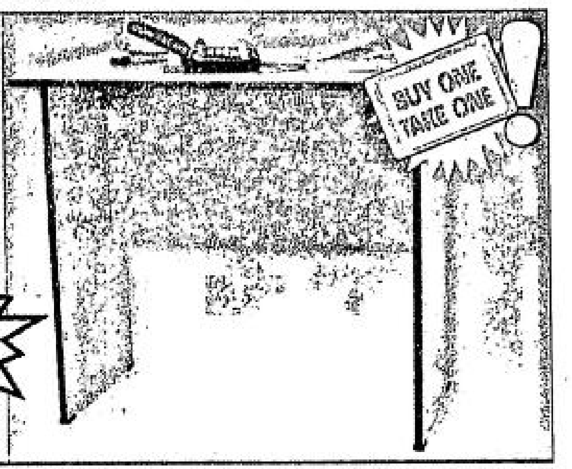

Best PRICE

NB
Oval Wooden Mirror
Beech, Natural
WK/835S/PC1600

P895

SANWA Office Table
Grey Color, MK850
930x600x735mm

P1,549


BUY ONE TAKE ONE!

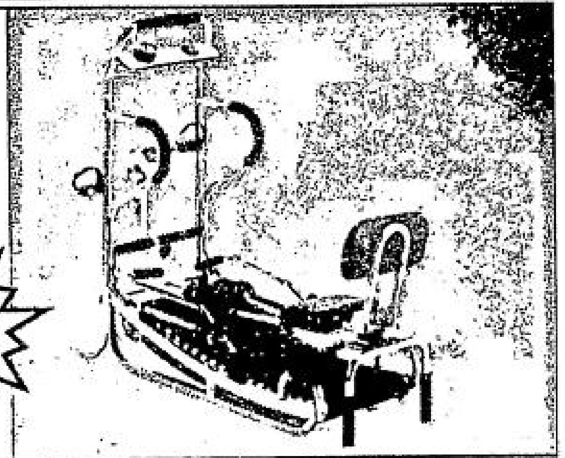
SURE SLEEP
White Pillow
20" x 30"

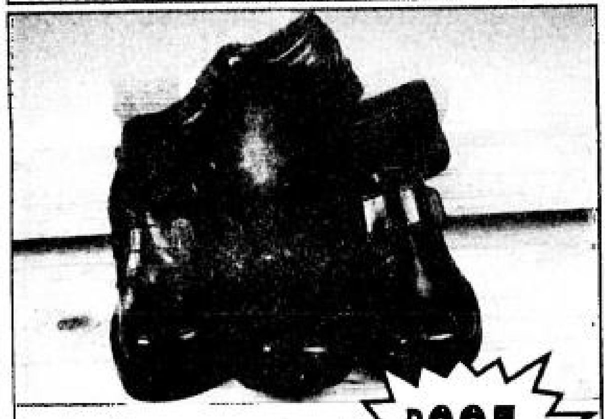
P219

BUY ONE TAKE ONE!

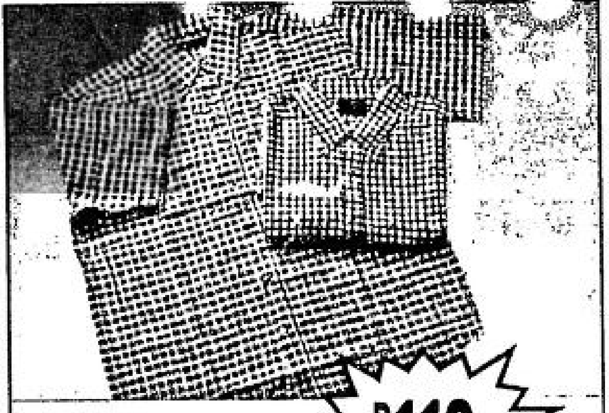
NB
12-Way Treadmill
Without Massager

P4,995




Branded
Men's Synthetic
Casual Shoes

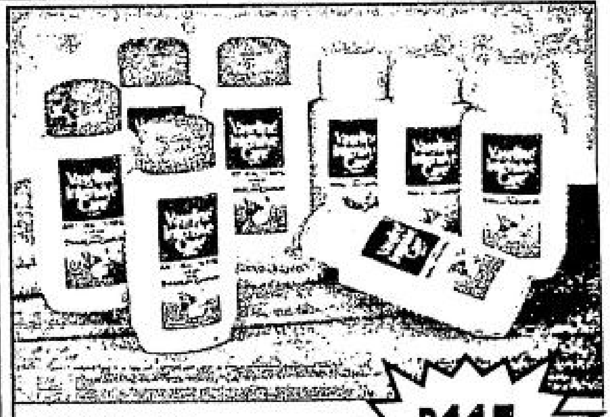
P695


Branded
Men's Polo

P119

WHITEWASH
Washing Machine
Detergent Powder
5 Kg

P119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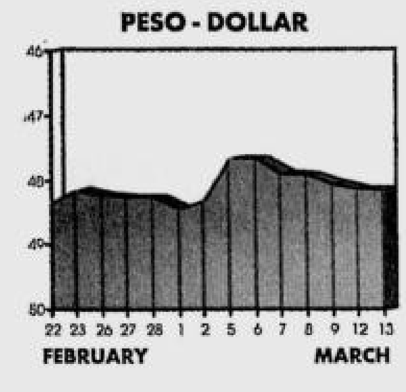

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As of 5 p.m., March 13, 2001

¥ 120.04 = $1

The US dollar was trading at 10.04 as of 5 p.m., March 13, 2001

GOLD:$270.20/270.70

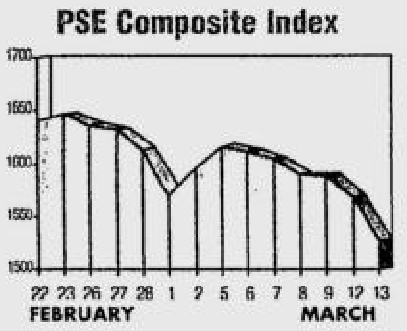
per ounce Hong Kong, March 13, 2001

Mar. 13, 2001

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency In US$	Foreign currency In Peso
United States	Dollar	1.077006	1.000000	48.1770
Japan	Yen	0.008948	0.008308	0.4003
United Kingdom	Pound	1.577598	1.464800	70.5697
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.138086	0.128213	6.1769
Switzerland	Franc	0.649817	0.603355	29.0678
Canada	Dollar	0.694305	0.644662	31.0579
Singapore	Dollar	0.611588	0.567859	27.3577
Australia	Dollar	0.548625	0.509398	24.5413
Bahrain	Dinar	2.856932	2.652661	127.7972
Kuwait	Dinar	N/A	N/A	N/A
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.287178	0.266645	12.8462
Brunei	Dollar	0.611865	0.568117	27.3702
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000103	0.000096	0.0046
Thailand	Baht	0.024645	0.022883	1.1024
UAE	Dirham	0.293230	0.272264	13.1169
Korea	Won	0.000842	0.000782	0.0377
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.928500	44.7323
Germany	Mark	0.511292	0.474735	22.8713
France	Franc	0.152450	0.141549	6.8194
Netherlands	Guilder	0.453780	0.421335	20.2987
Austria	Schilling	0.072673	0.067477	3.2508
Belgium	Franc	0.024789	0.023017	1.1089
Italy	Lire	0.000517	0.000480	0.0231
Finland	Markka	0.168187	0.156162	7.5234
Portugal	Escudo	0.004988	0.004631	0.2231
Spain	Peseta	0.006010	0.00558	0.2688
Luxemburg	Franc	0.024789	0.023017	1.1089
Ireland	Punt	1.269738	1.178952	56.7984

STOCK MARKET

Stocks end lower



(See stock market report on Page B4)

SHARES took another beating yesterday, shedding more than 2 percent as investors dumped holdings in reaction to further steep declines on Wall Street and sell-offs in other regional markets, traders said.

"There's an old saying that when the United States sneezes, we catch a cold and when they catch a cold we get pneumonia . . . right now they have a cold," All Asia Asset Management portfolio manager Albert Chua said.

The 33-share main composite closed down 41.13 points, or 2.62 percent, at 1,526.40, with 78 stocks falling, just five advancing and 32 remaining unchanged.

Turnover improved to P345.39 million, after Monday's record low of P196.628 million.

A&A Securities Inc. research head Astro del Castillo said external rather than domestic factors were now driving the market with both the local, and few remaining foreign investors, offloading stocks on concerns over the meltdown in New York.

However, the selling pressure remained relatively light given the still thin turnover and the main index should see firm support at the 1,500-point mark, the next technical support level, Del Castillo said.

"There will probably be further downside (in the coming days) but we hope the main index can hold at 1,500 points within this week," Del Castillo said.

He expected to see some bargain-hunting interest emerge at this level.

All Asia Asset Management's Chua said that offshore funds, after the brief flurry that followed Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's swearing in as President in January, have largely absented themselves from the market.

This was likely to continue until there was some significant positive local development to encourage them back in, he said.

"The market has been left to the locals and they are technically driven so we could see the market bounce off its next technical support mark (1,500 points on the main index)," Chua said.

Tuesday's sell-off was across the board, with few stocks spared. *Reuters*

SMC joins B2B exchange

CATERING Exchange, the first B2B catering/food exchange in the Philippines, has announced the participation of San Miguel Corp. (SMC) in the project. Within the next few months, it said buyers could browse through the catalogues of selected products of San Miguel and buy them online.

"Offering our customers access to buy our products through Catering Exchange is one of the first few steps we are undertaking in entering the Net economy," said a ranking official of SMC. "We believe technology is a vital part of a successful business nowadays and we look forward to working together to provide customers with "e-means" to purchase our products."

"As a member of the food industry, we understand the importance of having as much products in our e-market. Having SMC as trading partners enables us to increase these numbers significantly with the assurance that buyers are getting quality products," said Daniel Pido, COO of Catering Exchange.

Catering Exchange provides the platform for the catering industry. It is designed to improve the experience of purchasing food and other catering-related items online.

Asian markets follow Nasdaq, Wall St. slide

FOLLOWING Wall Street's lead, stock markets in the Asia-Pacific region fell sharply yesterday. The sell-off was specially troubling in Japan, where the new record low came one day after the country had learned its deeply troubled economy narrowly avoided a recession late last year.

Across the Asia-Pacific, traders were alarmed by the figures the day before in New York, where the Nasdaq composite index fell 6.3 percent to close below 2,000 points for the first time in 27 months. The Dow Jones industrial average dropped more than 400 points, or 4.1 percent.

One reason was a series of warnings from high-tech companies in the United States, where the main bourses have been suffering from bearish sentiment for months.

The tech-heavy Nasdaq index is now down nearly 62 percent from the closing high it reached a year ago, and the selling spilled over to blue chips that had earlier escaped investors' fury.

In Tokyo, where the benchmark 225-issue Nikkei Stock Average had hit a 16-year low on Monday, trading opened 2.85 percent lower. By midday, the index had recovered slightly, losing 256.81 points, or 2.11 percent, to 11,914.56.

"The US market is there, but I think the sell-off today is due to the problems in Japan," said Susumu Kato, a bond strategist at Lehman Brothers Japan Inc. "The banking sector problem has gotten more serious, and the feeling is that the government won't take effective action. The problems are structural, political and economic," he said in an interview.

Japanese Finance Minister Kiichi Miyazawa told reporters he wished his country's financial markets would stop taking their lead from Wall Street. But he also said: "The economy itself is certainly in a state of deflation. There is no hiding that fact." Deflation, the reverse of inflation, is a decline in the prices of goods and services.

In Seoul, the Korea Composite Stock Price Index fell 3.7 percent in early trading, but it, too, recovered somewhat by midday, losing 14.47 points, or 2.65 percent, at 530.58.

"It's mainly a chain reaction linked to Wall Street," said Lee In-ho, an analyst at SK Securities Co.

In Hong Kong, the blue-chip Hang Seng Index tumbled 3.3 percent at first, but by noon it was trading down 361.75 points, or 2.63 percent, at 13,414.97.

Property and banking companies suffered the most.

Singapore's Straits Times Index opened down more than 3 percent, hitting a new low for 2001. At midday, the benchmark was down 2.95 percent, or 54.57 points, to 1,795.27.

In addition to Wall Street's woes, traders said, a profit warning from telecommunications-equipment maker LM Ericsson, which is based in Sweden, unnerved Singapore investors.

In Australia, the Sydney Stock Exchange's benchmark All Ordinaries index was down 64.60 points, or 1.98 percent, to 3,201.20 at midday.

Philippine shares took another beating yesterday, shedding more than 2 percent as investors dumped holdings in reaction to further steep declines on Wall Street and sell-offs in other regional markets, traders said.

The 33-share main composite closed down 41.13 points, or 2.62 percent, at 1,526.40, with 78 stocks falling, just five advancing and 32 remaining unchanged.

Turnover improved to P345.39 million, after Monday's record low of P196.628 million. *AP*

Subic, Clark assets eyed to raise gov't funds

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE DEPARTMENT of Finance has expressed keen support to a plan to raise a super fund worth between $3 billion and $5 billion from the securitization of assets of the Subic naval and Clark air bases in Northern Luzon.

Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority Chair Felicito Payumo said Finance Secretary Alberto Romulo has expressed interest in the funds because it could be tapped by the government to settle part of its international obligations.

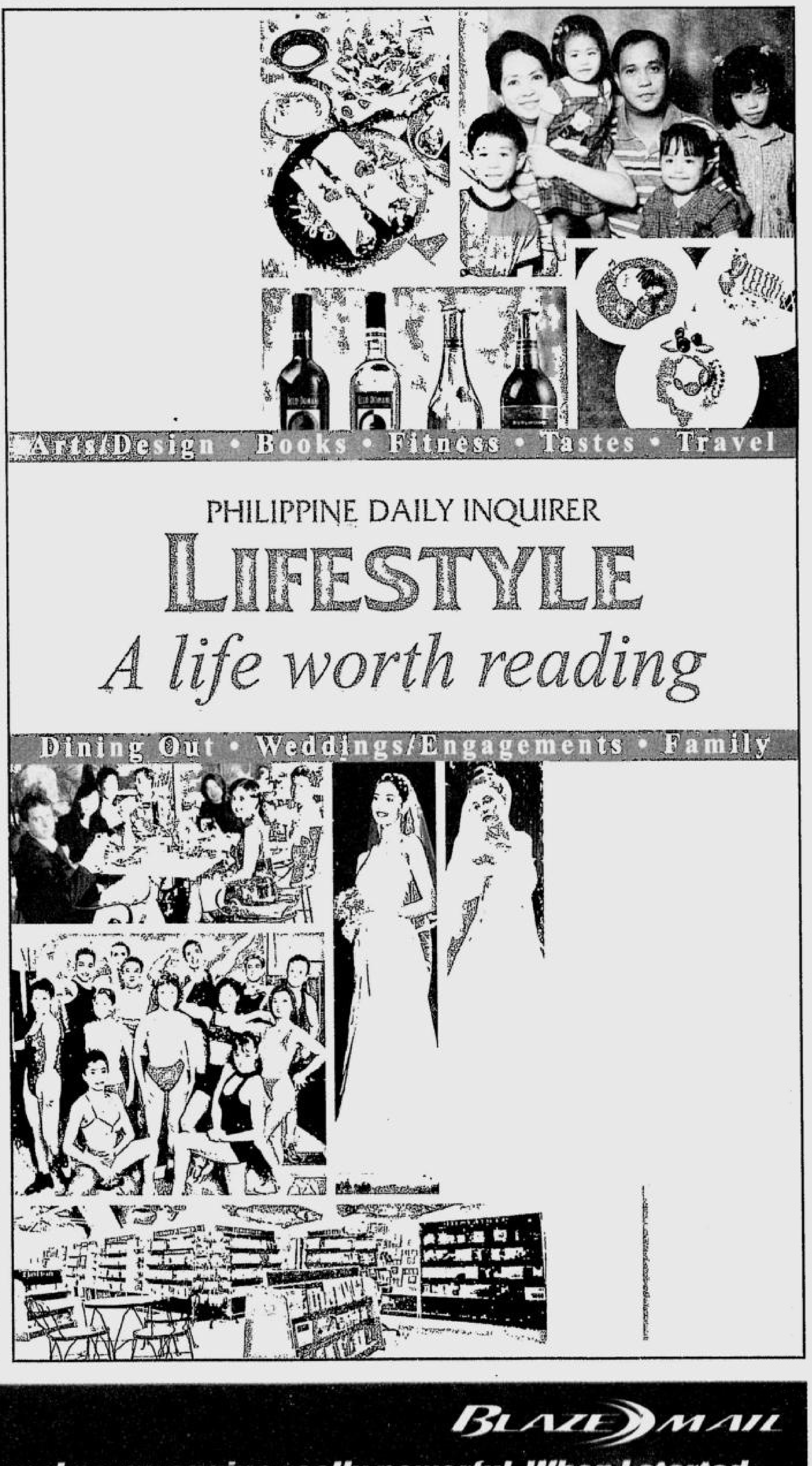
Based on the Subic-Clark Alliance for Development (Scad) project, Payumo said the SBMA and the Bases Conversion Development Authority (proprietor of the Clark economic zone) would issue securities backed by future revenues from leasehold rights, and development and investment income from the former American bases.

Payumo estimated that Subic has $10 billion worth of assets while Clark has $5 billion that could be leveraged with the issuance of asset-backed securities.

Payumo said that securitization would shift the development of the bases to more experienced private hands. He said SBMA was mapping out the privatization of most of the operations of Subic in line with its goal of evolving into a mere regulator of the former naval base.

Payumo said the securitization strategy would also raise money up front for the cash-starved government to bankroll infrastructure projects that would link Subic's deep-sea harbor with Clark's international airport and spur growth of Northern Luzon.

SUBIC/ B4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RP exceeds IMF loan ceiling

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BAGUIO COUNTRY CLUB	600,000	650,000
CAPITOL HILLS GOLF CLUB	115,000	120,000
EAGLE RIDGE A	400,000	
FOREST HILLS A	280,000	290,000
LUISITA GOLF		550,000
MAKATI SPORTS A		400,000
MAKATI SPORTS B*		500,000 *
MANILA POLO CLUB	3,200,000	
MANILA SOUTHWOODS A	850,000	
MANILA SOUTHWOODS B*	900,000 *	
ORCHARD A		300,000
PUERTO AZUL	130,000	140,000
QUEZON CITY SPORTS	230,000	250,000
RIVIERA GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB		280,000
TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS COUNTRY CLUB		495,000
TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS COUNTRY GOLF		1,250,000 *
TAGAYTAY MIDLANDS	870,000	900,000
VALLEY GOLF	300,000	350,000
WACK WACK	8,500,000	

TEL. NOS. 853-1626 or 853-1627

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE COUNTRY has exceeded its $1-billion loan ceiling with the International Monetary Fund making a post-program monitoring arrangement with the Fund imperative and not a matter of choice.

Government sources said the country had no choice but to enter into a post-program monitoring with the IMF after its outstanding loans reached $1.77 billion, or $770 million more than the ceiling.

IMF is scheduled to hold a press conference today to share the results of its executive board meeting on March 1.

The board meeting tackled the results of its first meeting with the Macapagal administration last February as well as the updates on the Philippines' monitoring program.

Under the post program monitoring, IMF reviews the country's economic performance three times a year compared to a once-a-year consultation for countries without a program with the Fund.

Unlike the standby arrangement, however, the post monitoring will neither feature a letter of intent nor require a performance criteria.

The IMF mission will issue an aide memoire containing its assessment, based on documents outlining the future country's agenda with the Fund.

Government sources said that after its meeting with the Macapagal administration in February, the IMF had expressed optimism and support to the reforms being planned by the present administration.

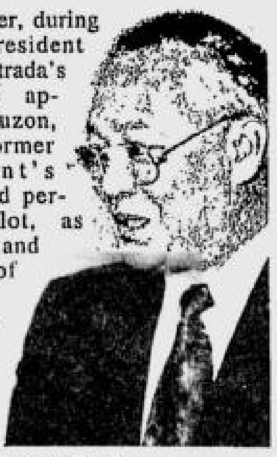
The meetings with the Macapagal administration focused on re-establishing fiscal discipline, bringing structural reforms on track, and improving governance.

Concerns of the Fund, said government sources, still centered on the possibility that the P145-billion budget deficit projection this year would be exceeded.

The Fund is also apprehensive that important structural reforms may be further delayed or may not be passed at all.

The Philippines concluded in December its $1.4-billion loan program with the IMF. But because of the failure of the Estrada administration to contain the budget deficit to P62.5 billion last year, the last tranche of the loan was not released and the program was considered failure.

Ex-trade secretary appointed CDC chair


NAVARRO

CLARK FIELD, Pampanga—President Macapagal-Arroyo appointed former Trade Secretary Rizalino Navarro to the top posts of the Clark Development Corp. and Clark International Airport Corp. here.

The President appointed Navarro as chair of the board of CDC and CIAC replacing former CDC chief executive officer and president Rogelio Singson and CIAC chief executive officer and president Frank Puzon.

Ms Macapagal also appointed lawyer Emmanuel Angeles, president of the Angeles University Foundation, as CDC president and chief executive officer.

In his farewell speech during the flag-raising ceremony Monday, Singson, also chair of the Bases Conversion and Development Authority, asked the CDC employees to support Navarro and Angeles.

Singson expressed hopes that the two would continue his programs for the state-owned firm and the Clark Special Economic Zone.

His programs include ensuring a "business friendly" atmosphere here by reducing red tape and making the CDC organization more professional.

CDC was created in 1992 during the term of former President Fidel Ramos to manage the 33,653-hectare Clark Special Economic Zone.

The CIAC was formed in 1995, also under Ramos, to operate and manage the Clark International Airport and its 2,200-hectare aviation area.

During the term of former CDC presidents Antonio Henson, Romeo David and Rufo Colayco, the CDC and CIAC had a common CEO and president. The concurrent CDC president and CEO automatically assumes the posts of president and CEO of CIAC since the latter is a subsidiary of CDC.

However, during former President Joseph Estrada's term, he appointed Puzon, the former president's friend and personal pilot, as president and CEO of CIAC.

The change of leadership in CDC and CIAC was done quietly apparently to avoid any adverse reaction from the politicians and non-government organizations pushing for the full development of this economic zone and the operation of the Clark airport.

Earlier, former Angeles City Mayor Edgardo Pamintuan was among those who had been considered by the President to assume the CDC and CIAC presidency.

However, some groups in Pampanga aired their opposition to the appointment of a local politician to the state-owned firm.

Ms Macapagal instead appointed Pamintuan, a Lakas official in the province and a defeated congressional candidate in 1998, as general manager of the National Housing Authority.

Some groups in Pampanga, including militant student organizations, also opposed the appointment of Angeles as CDC president. *Jun Malig, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

NEA, ADB finalizing $180-M loan

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE NATIONAL Electrification Administration is working out with the Asian Development Bank the details of a $180-million loan package that will be used to pursue the government's rural electrification program.

NEA Administrator Manuel Luis Sanchez said there were still about 8,500 barangays in the country that needed to be energized.

"We are availing ourselves of this loan package because these barangays really need government assistance. They are what we call non-viable or missionary areas," Sanchez said in a media conference.

Most, if not all, of the remaining barangays that have no electricity are in far-flung areas, making it uneconomical to connect them to main electricity grids.

Sanchez said the ADB has sent a task force to work on the details of the loan package with NEA in the next six to eight weeks.

NEA aims to have 90 percent of the country's 42,000 barangays energized by 2004. As of September last year, only 78.9 percent of these barangays have access to electricity.

The administrator also said that he was not keen on pursuing NEA's application for a two-year moratorium on the payment of its debts with various creditors worth P2.893 billion.

NEA/B3

Consumers to shoulder Napocor losses

NEW Energy Secretary Jose Isidro N. Camacho yesterday said he favored passing on the losses of National Power Corp. to consumers rather than impose a universal levy.

"Whether universal charges are appropriate or not, is an important issue," Camacho told reporters.

He said he was personally inclined to pass on Napocor's losses to those who use electricity because "in a way, these are the sectors that created the loss."

"I think it (passing on the losses to the consumers) is the fairest way in dealing with this issue," he said.

He said the issue borders on whether to let consumers pay for Napocor's losses or to transfer parts of these to the national government. The second option would mean all taxpayers would be made to shoulder the losses whether or not they are using electricity.

The state-owned power firm earlier reported that its net loss as of end-2000 was about P12.9 billion while its total debts in the same period reached about P900 billion.

The power sector restructuring bill requires the national government to only P200 billion of Napocor's financial obligations.

Moreover, Camacho said the matter was compounded by the issue of stranded cost recovery on Napocor's contracts with independent power producers.

"There's a bit of an outcry against both options because of the suspicion that the stranded costs due to the contracts are inappropriate or were done with mischief," he explained.

Napocor earlier said it was reviewing its existing IPP contracts. One reason was that some of the contracts were found to be too expensive.

Ronnel W. Domingo

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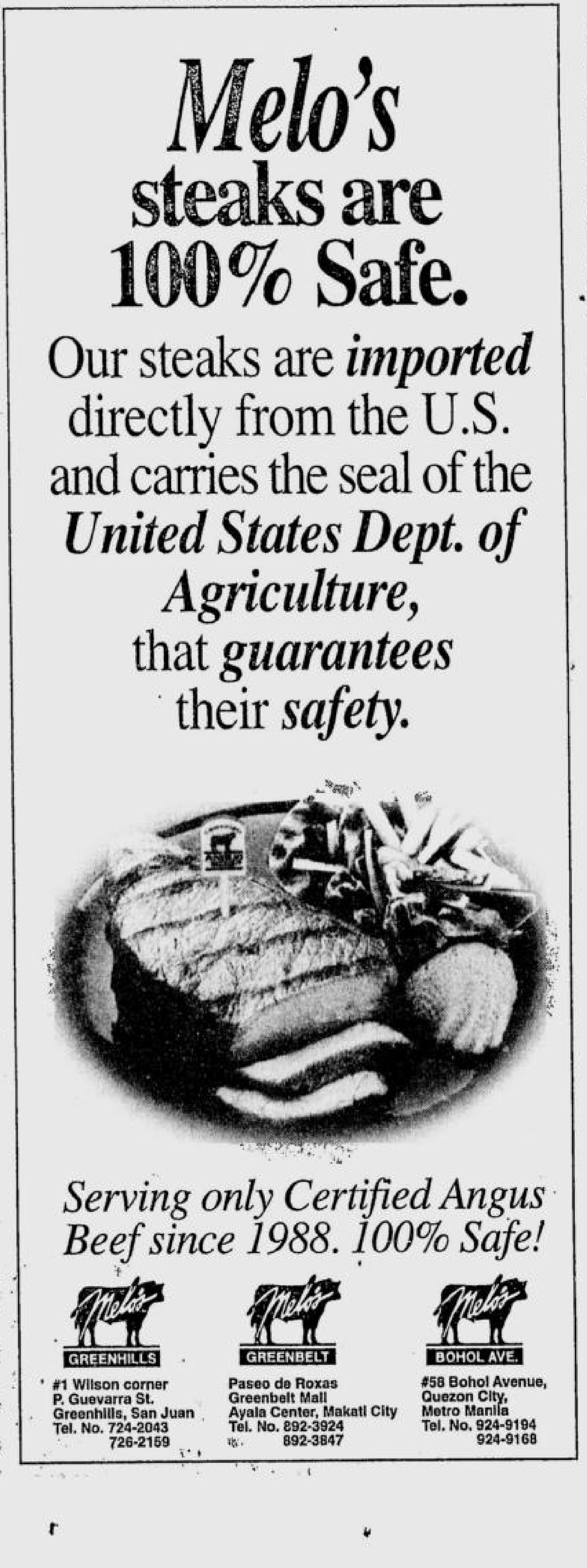
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MONITORING IMPERATIVE

RP exceeds IMF loan ceiling

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AS OF MARCH 14, 2001

	BUYING	SELLING
ALABANG COUNTRY CLUB	1,850,000	
BAGUIO COUNTRY CLUB	800,000	850,000
CAPITOL HILLS GOLF CLUB	115,000	120,000
EAGLE RIDGE A	400,000	
FOREST HILLS A	250,000	280,000
LUISITA GOLF		550,000
MAKATI SPORTS A		400,000
MAKATI SPORTS B*		500,000 *
MANILA POLO CLUB	3,200,000	
MANILA SOUTHWOODS A	850,000	
MANILA SOUTHWOODS B*	800,000 *	
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BY CLARISSA S. BATINO

THE COUNTRY has exceeded its $1-billion loan ceiling with the International Monetary Fund making a post-program monitoring arrangement with the Fund imperative and not a matter of choice.

Government sources said the country had no choice but to enter into a post-program monitoring with the IMF after its outstanding loans reached $1.77 billion, or $770 million more than the ceiling.

IMF is scheduled to hold a press conference today to share the results of its executive board meeting on March 1.

The board meeting tackled the results of its first meeting with the Macapagal administration last February as well as the updates on the Philippines' monitoring program.

Under the post program monitoring, IMF reviews the country's economic performance three times a year compared to a once-a-year consultation for countries without a program with the Fund.

Unlike the standby arrangement, however, the post monitoring will neither feature a letter of intent nor require a performance criteria.

The IMF mission will issue an aide memoire containing its assessment, based on documents outlining the future country's agenda with the Fund.

Government sources said that after its meeting with the Macapagal administration in February, the IMF had expressed optimism and support to the reforms being planned by the present administration.

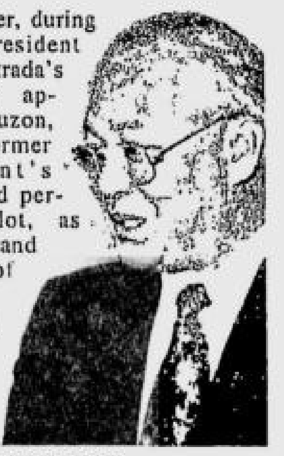
The meetings with the Macapagal administration focused on re-establishing fiscal discipline, bringing structural reforms on track, and improving governance.

Concerns of the Fund, said government sources, still centered on the possibility that the P145-billion budget deficit projection this year would be exceeded.

The Fund is also apprehensive that important structural reforms may be further delayed or may not be passed at all.

The Philippines concluded in December its $1.4-billion loan program with the IMF. But because of the failure of the Estrada administration to contain the budget deficit to P62.5 billion last year, the last tranche of the loan was not released and the program was considered failure.

Ex-trade secretary appointed CDC chair


NAVARRO

CLARK FIELD, Pampanga—President Macapagal-Arroyo appointed former Trade Secretary Rizalino Navarro to the top posts of the Clark Development Corp. and Clark International Airport Corp. here.

The President appointed Navarro as chair of the board of CDC and CIAC replacing former CDC chief executive officer and president Rogelio Singson and CIAC chief executive officer and president Frank Puzon.

Ms Macapagal also appointed lawyer Emmanuel Angeles, president of the Angeles University Foundation, as CDC president and chief executive officer.

In his farewell speech during the flag-raising ceremony Monday, Singson, also chair of the Bases Conversion and Development Authority, asked the CDC employees to support Navarro and Angeles.

Singson expressed hopes that the two would continue his programs for the state-owned firm and the Clark Special Economic Zone.

His programs include ensuring a "business friendly" atmosphere here by reducing red tape and making the CDC organization more professional.

CDC was created in 1992 during the term of former President Fidel Ramos to manage the 33,653-hectare Clark Special Economic Zone.

The CIAC was formed in 1995, also under Ramos, to operate and manage the Clark International Airport and its 2,200-hectare aviation area.

During the term of former CDC presidents Antonio Henson, Romeo David and Rufo Colayco, the CDC and CIAC had a common CEO and president. The concurrent CDC president and CEO automatically assumes the posts of president and CEO of CIAC since the latter is a subsidiary of CDC.

However, during former President Joseph Estrada's term, he appointed Puzon, the former president's friend and personal pilot, as president and CEO of CIAC.

The change of leadership in CDC and CIAC was done quietly apparently to avoid any adverse reaction from the politicians and non-government organizations pushing for the full development of this economic zone and the operation of the Clark airport.

Earlier, former Angeles City Mayor Edgardo Pamintuan was among those who had been considered by the President to assume the CDC and CIAC presidency.

However, some groups in Pampanga aired their opposition to the appointment of a local politician to the state-owned firm.

Ms Macapagal instead appointed Pamintuan, a Lakas official in the province and a defeated congressional candidate in 1998, as general manager of the National Housing Authority.

Some groups in Pampanga, including militant student organizations, also opposed the appointment of Angeles as CDC president. *Jun Malig, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

NEA, ADB finalizing $180-M loan

BY RONNEL W. DOMINGO

THE NATIONAL Electrification Administration is working out with the Asian Development Bank the details of a $180-million loan package that will be used to pursue the government's rural electrification program.

NEA Administrator Manuel Luis Sanchez said there were still about 8,500 barangays in the country that needed to be energized.

"We are availing ourselves of this loan package because these barangays really need government assistance. They are what we call non-viable or missionary areas," Sanchez said in a media conference.

Most, if not all, of the remaining barangays that have no electricity are in far-flung areas, making it uneconomical to connect them to main electricity grids.

Sanchez said the ADB has sent a task force to work on the details of the loan package with NEA in the next six to eight weeks.

NEA aims to have 90 percent of the country's 42,000 barangays energized by 2004. As of September last year, only 78.9 percent of these barangays have access to electricity.

The administrator also said that he was not keen on pursuing NEA's application for a two-year moratorium on the payment of its debts with various creditors worth P2.893 billion.

NEA/B3

Consumers to shoulder Napocor losses

NEW Energy Secretary Jose Isidro N. Camacho yesterday said he favored passing on the losses of National Power Corp. to consumers rather than impose a universal levy.

"Whether universal charges are appropriate or not, is an important issue," Camacho told reporters.

He said he was personally inclined to pass on Napocor's losses to those who use electricity because "in a way, these are the sectors that created the loss."

"I think it (passing on the losses to the consumers) is the fairest way in dealing with this issue," he said.

He said the issue borders on whether to let consumers pay for Napocor's losses or to transfer parts of these to the national government. The second option would mean all taxpayers would be made to shoulder the losses whether or not they are using electricity.

The state-owned power firm earlier reported that its net loss as of end-2000 was about P12.9 billion while its total debts in the same period reached about P900 billion.

The power sector restructuring bill requires the national government to only P200 billion of Napocor's financial obligations.

Moreover, Camacho said the matter was compounded by the issue of stranded cost recovery on Napocor's contracts with independent power producers.

"There's a bit of an outcry against both options because of the suspicion that the stranded costs due to the contracts are inappropriate or were done with mischief," he explained.

Napocor earlier said it was reviewing its existing IPP contracts. One reason was that some of the contracts were found to be too expensive.

Ronnel W. Domingo

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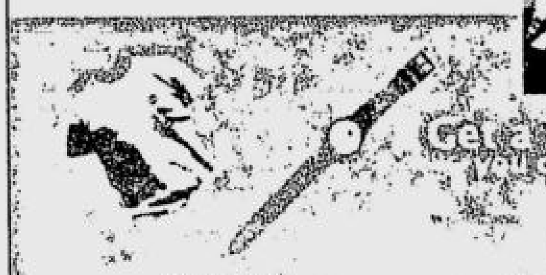

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NEA, ADB finalizing $180-M loan

(From page B2)

The agency proposed to convert part of its debts into equity as soon as Congress approves an increase in its capitalization. It also offered to pay P1.966 billion over a period of 10 years.

"I would rather work within the framework of our project and try to settle all obligations within an allowable period rather than just delaying payment for two years," Sanchez said.

Besides, he said, a debt moratorium would mean higher interest rates on NEA's debts.

Also, the agency has yet to use the remaining $14 million of a $95-million loan from the Japan Bank for International Cooperation.

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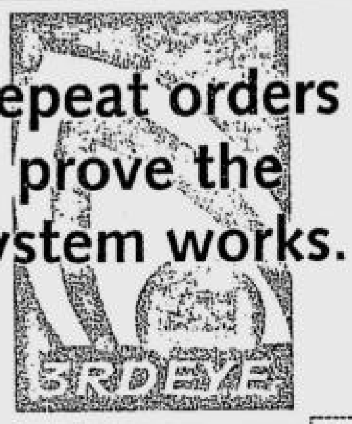
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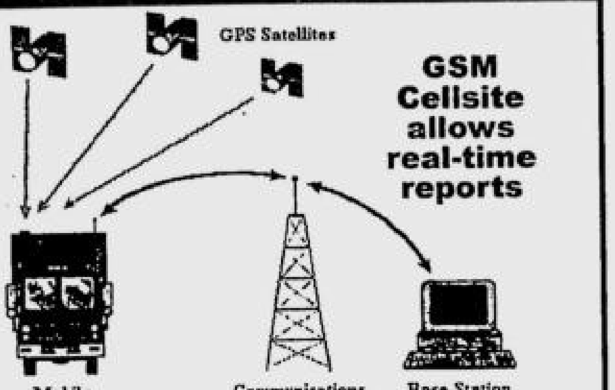
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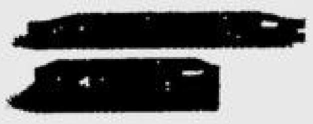

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*Fortune Magazine, August 1999

Belle converts debt papers worth ₱2.35B into equity

By Doris C. Dumlao

LEISURE and gaming firm Belle Corp. yesterday disclosed a P2.35 billion ($49 million) debt-to-equity conversion program to improve its cash flow.

Belle assistant corporate secretary Ma. Louisa Gonzales told the Philippine Stock Exchange that the amount of debt to be converted into equity represented the value of floating rate notes (FRNs) its bondholders agreed to exchange for equity.

The conversion represented about 39 percent of the $125 million worth of FRNs issued by Belle maturing in May 2002. Aside from these FRNs, the company has some P1 billion worth of peso-denominated obligations.

The debt-to-equity conversion will result in the issuance of 2.4 million new Belle shares.

"The Belle common stock to be issued in exchange for the FRNs submitted pursuant to the exchange offer shall be issued from the corporation's unissued capital stock as an exempt transaction under the Securities and Regulation Code and will be applied for listing with the PSE," Gonzales said.

Under the terms of Belle's exchange offer, the new shares to be issued may not be traded on the PSE until six months after these are listed. The offer was in line with the company's efforts to reduce its debt burden and hedge against foreign exchange risk.

Belle has offered the FRN holders to exchange the notes including accrued and unpaid interest at face value.

Belle is also considering to raise up to P2 billion in fresh funds through private placements.

Late last year, the company decided to defer the conduct of its planned rights and new warrants offer due to the political and economic uncertainties, which were expected to erode the demand for these fund-raising exercises.

Belle was originally planning to raise up to P4.5 billion through a combination of new stock rights and warrants offering last year for debt refinancing, capital expenditures and general corporate purposes.

The company, which has an existing paid-up capital of P4 billion, wanted to jack up its capitalization to enhance its liquidity position. Its flagship project is the plush Tagaytay Highlands Corp.

Belle has recently been dragged in the plunder charges being prepared by the Department of Justice as ousted President Estrada allegedly profited from kickbacks when he forced state-pension funds Government Service Insurance System and Social Security System to invest in the company.

Aboitiz unit clarifies court order on refund

THE ABOITIZ group yesterday said its wholly owned subsidiary Davao Light and Power Corp. (DPLC) had no excess earnings to refund its customers.

The disclosure followed reports that the Court of Appeals had ordered the company to refund P300 million to its customers due to overcharging.

The company clarified that the CA decision covered only a time period for a rate review and that there was no mention of any amount to be refunded.

"After the matter of the review period is finally settled by the courts, the Energy Regulatory Board still has to conduct a rate review to determine if in fact at any time during the said period, the company exceeded its allowable return on rate base (RORB)," Aboitiz Equity Ventures corporate secretary Eugeniano Perez III told the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday.

"It has been and continues to be DPLC's sincere position that it has not exceeded its allowable return on rate base, and that consequently, there are no excess funds to be refunded," Perez said.

The case arose from a petition filed by two businessmen for refund of excess profits pursuant to a Supreme Court decision which had reduced the appraisal value of DLPC's fixed assets in service by more than 50 percent. With this reduction, the petitioners claimed DLPC exceeded the 12 percent RORB limit set by the ERB.

The ERB limited the review period to only 11 months covering the period Jan. 19, 1984 to Dec. 14, 1984. The recent CA decision did not actually call for a refund but ordered the ERB to extend the review period to more than five years and eight months, covering the period Jan. 19, 1984 to Sept. 18, 1989.

Depending on the results of the review by the ERB, a decision will be made whether or not DLPC has actually exceeded the 12-percent RORB limit imposed by the ERB and if a refund should be given to consumers.

Despite such a setback on DLPC, brokerage firm ATR Kim Eng Securities said it was still bullish on AEV.

"With total cash of P2.6 billion as of end-September 2000, AEV can easily provide the funds for DLPC in case the ERB decides in favor of the petitioners. Notably, AEV remains one of the most financially prudent companies with its consistently low net debt-to-equity ratio of 0.05 times as of the first nine months of 2000," ATR Kim Eng analyst Laura Dy Liacco said.

"The issue currently trades at a 45-percent discount to its break-up net asset value of P2.88 per share and at a 38-percent discount off its book value of P2.56 per share," Dy Liacco said.

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Oscar M. Lopez, chair of Manila North Tollways Corp., signs the engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) contract between MNTC and Leighton Contractors Asia Ltd. (LCAL), represented by its country manager, Peter Gomm, (right). Assisting the signatories is J. Luigi L. Bautista, MNTC vice president for contracts management (standing). Under the contract, LCAL will undertake the full design, construction, rehabilitation and expansion of the North Luzon Expressway. Present during the signing is MNTC president and CEO Jose P. De Jesus (left).

US realty group forecasts property recovery in 2002

ERA, a US-based global real estate sales and services group, has forecast a turnaround for the local property industry within the second half of 2002.

"All signs point to an upturn in the property market by the third quarter of next year, said Electronic Realty Associates (ERA) Philippines corporate officer Alyn Red.

ERA's upbeat assessment was based on the global realty firm's extensive research into the changing business and investment opportunities in the Philippines and other markets worldwide where it maintains a strong presence.

Red noted that the brightening political and business scenario "augurs well for the Philippines' rise as an investment destination in the Asian region." She cited improving economic indicators such as a low interest rate regime, a stable exchange rate and single-digit inflation.

She also predicted gains this year for the country's gross national product, which grew by 4.2 percent in 2000 from 3.7 percent the year before, and gross domestic product, which increased by 3.9 percent last year compared with 3.3 percent in 1999.

"The remarkably high turnover rate reportedly achieved by a leading local property developer for a recently launched residential project is a sign of good things to come for local realtors," Red said. "We won't be surprised if one or two other top developers have posted an impressive sales record of their own in recent months."

ERA brings to its Philippine operations a strong track record of more than 25 years in the residential and office realty business. It is known the world over as a provider of a full range of quality real estate products and services backed by cutting-edge technology including an Internet-based realty communications and marketing network which gives wide international reach and exposure for the company's product inventories.

ERA's network of more than 3,000 marketing offices in the United States and 30 other countries and manpower complement of 34,000 sales associates worldwide make it the realtor of choice for local home buyers and sellers.

"With a stable political leadership and strong economic fundamentals firmly in place, we intend to carry out ERA's mission to bring a global dimension to the Philippine realty business," the ERA officer said.

PROFIT WORRIES

Nasdaq plummets below 2,000

NEW YORK—Investors alarmed by a series of warnings from high-tech companies pummeled stocks Monday, sending the Nasdaq composite index skidding below 2000 for the first time in 27 months and slicing more than 400 points from the Dow Jones industrial average.

The extent and speed of the sell-off stunned even investors who have become accustomed to the bearish atmosphere that has pervaded Wall Street for months. Monday's losses extended a sell-off that began last week when tech bellwethers Yahoo!, Intel and Cisco Systems said the weak economy will hurt business in the coming months.

"I'm not going to jump out any windows . . . but this is significant," said Jim Jordan, a Lexington, Kentucky, marketing executive who estimates he's lost as much as $200,000 recently.

"I'm going to ride out the storm, though."

The Nasdaq dropped 129.40 to 1,923.38 in heavy trading, a 6.3-percent loss. The tech-focused index is now down nearly 62 percent from the closing high of 5,048.62 it reached on March 10, 2000. The last time the index closed below 2,000 was Dec. 14, 1998.

The selling spilled over to blue chips that lately had escaped investors' fury. The Dow fell 436.37 to 10,208.25, a 4.1-percent decline, leaving it nearly 13 percent off the closing high of 11,722.98 it reached Jan. 14, 2000.

The drop was the Dow's fifth biggest point loss, but the index managed to recover from a decline of 477 points shortly before the close.

Wall Street's broadest measure, the Standard & Poor's 500, plunged 53.12 to 1,180.30 for a loss of 4.3 percent. The S-and-P has lost nearly a fourth of its value since its closing high of 1,527.46 reached March 24 last year.

Losses were widespread, reflecting investors' worries that technology stocks are still overpriced and might take a while to recover because of the weakened economy.

Cisco dropped as Wall Street continued to react to the networking company's announcement Friday it will trim several thousand jobs because of soft demand for its products. Cisco was off $1.81 at $18.81, a nearly 9-percent loss.

Investors also sold off Intel, down $1.69 at $27.75, and Microsoft, down $4.75 at $51.94.

"The Nasdaq is in a freefall and every time you try to time the bottom of this market, you get your head handed to you," said Bill Barker, an investment consultant with Dain Rauscher.

The Dow fell along with its technology components, which include Intel and Microsoft, but stocks considered less risky investments in times of economic weakness also declined. Merck fell $1.54 to $74.15, while Philip Morris dropped $2.15 to $49.60.

Barker said the market's decline is the result of several factors, including disappointment that the Federal Reserve isn't lowering rates more aggressively. Margin calls might be another factor, as the sinking market forces investors to sell stocks to repay brokerage loans.

The biggest reason, however, is frustration over the fact that there's no apparent end to weak earnings. With the end of the first quarter approaching and earnings warnings season beginning, the bad news may just be starting.

"We just don't have anything to look forward to," Barker said. "The interest rate cut we'll get later this month has already been factored into stock prices. The tax bill will probably get hung up in the Senate. And this bad earnings news keeps coming." *AP*

Subic, Clark assets eyed to raise gov't funds

(From page B1)

Payumo said the interconnection of Clark and Subic would jumpstart the development of both ports because the two economic zones would feed on each other's strengths.

"Subic is an ideal transshipment hub in the region but it has no more room for major investments because we have very flat lands left for development. While Clark still has vast flat lands and it has a world-class runway but it has no access and it has inefficient road access," Payumo said. A superhighway will be built between Clark and Subic over the next four years to cut travel time between the two ecozones to 30 minutes.

Payumo said the SBMA and the BCDA were just awaiting for the issuance of an executive order from the President to start the ball rolling. The Office of the Government Corporate Counsel has already ruled on the legality of the securitization of government assets such as the Heritage Memorial Park, Smokey Mountain project, Old Bilibid Compound project, and Commonwealth Enterprise.

The proposed super fund will be managed by a board of governors composed of representatives from the BCDA, SBMA, financial advisers and private investors.

Philippine Stock Exchange

(As of Tuesday, March 13, 2001)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Bank of the Phil. Islands	69	69	68	69	308,000
China Banking Corp.	650	650	650	650	520
Chinatrust Comm. Bank	16.5	16.5	16.5	16.5	3,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	52.5	52.5	50.5	51	37,300
First E-Bank Corp.	2.04	2.04	2	2	10,000
Global Business Bank Inc.	66	75	66	71	2,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	225	226	221	223	41,820
Prudential Bank	510	510	510	510	100
Philippine National Bank	46	46	45	45	75,000
Phil. Savings Bank	28	29	28	29	600
Union Bank of the Phil.	26	26	25.5	26	28,800
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Bankard Inc.	1.54	1.54	1.54	1.54	9,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1210	1220	1210	1215	4,100
Pcl Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.18	1.18	1.18	1.18	15,000
Sun Life Financial Serv.	950	950	905	920	6,770
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	44.5	44.5	43	43	33,500
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.55	0.58	0.54	0.58	2,810,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	680	700	680	700	70
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.049	0.05	0.048	0.05	1,700,000
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	0.5	0.5	0.49	0.49	200,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	4	4	4	4	5,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	770	770	770	770	24,910
Ivantage Corp.	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	10,000
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.065	0.0675	0.0625	0.0675	278,800,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	51.5	51.5	50	50	15,800
Manila Electric Co. B	60	60	58	58.5	507,000
Petron Corp.	1.78	1.78	1.74	1.76	5,574,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.92	0.92	0.9	0.9	110,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	1.14	1.16	1.14	1.16	4,046,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc	0.58	0.59	0.52	0.55	2,030,000
William, Gothong & Aboitiz	2	2	2	2	50,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.42	0.42	0.42	0.42	240,000
Phil Nat'l Const. Corp.	11	11.25	11	11	19,500
Union Cement Corp.	0.87	0 87	0.87	0.87	520,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2	2	2	2	2,000
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	24,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	11.75	11.75	11.5	11.75	604,200
La Tondena Distillers Inc.	37	37	36.5	36.5	226,700
Pancake House Inc.	1.58	1.58	1.58	1.58	30,000
RFM Corp.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	295,000
San Miguel Corp. A	47.5	47.5	46.5	47	126,100
San Miguel Corp. B	54.5	54.5	54	54.5	44,000
Universal Robina Corp.	5	5	5	5	1,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.49	0.5	0.49	0.5	300,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.56	0.56	0.53	0.54	110,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.57	0.58	0.56	0.58	30,000
Ayala Corp.	7.5	7.5	7.3	7.3	2,681,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	1.56	1.56	1.54	1.56	1,748,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	12.25	12.25	11.75	12	2,700
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.9	0.95	0.9	0.95	260,000
A. Soriano Corp.	0.27	0.27	0.26	0.26	5,050,000
APC Group Inc.	0.2	0.22	0.2	0.22	600,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	0.35	0.35	0.34	0.35	180,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	1,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	2.95	2.95	2.7	2.85	4,400,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.175	0.175	0.175	0.175	700,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.43	0.43	0.42	0.42	290,000
Ebecom Holdings Inc.	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	1,530,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.18	1.2	1.16	1.2	980,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	23	23.25	22.75	23.25	188,500
Global Equities Inc	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	1,640,000
Ionics Inc.	12.5	12.5	12	12	194,000
Ipeople Inc.	0.86	0.86	0.86	0.86	60,000
Ipeople Inc. B	0.86	0.86	0.86	0.86	170,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	2.55	2.55	2.48	2.48	1,178,000
Macroasia Corp.	1.9	1.9	1.86	1.86	15,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.86	0.86	0.83	0.86	1,360,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.39	0.39	0.35	0.35	600,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.54	0.54	0.51	0.52	6,850,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.67	0.67	0.65	0.66	210,000
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co.	0.13	0.13	0.1	0.1	150,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	590,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	2600	28	26	28	440,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Corro-Coat Inc.	1.42	1.42	1.42	1.42	9,000
Matsushita Elec Phil Corp.	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	5,000
Music Corp.	2.85	2.85	2.85	2.85	205,000
Central Azucar Don Pedro	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	30,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	11.5	11.75	11.5	11.75	252,100
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Bella Corp.	0.55	0.57	0.55	0.57	720,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.65	0.65	0.63	0.65	6,380,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.64	0.64	0.61	0.62	550,000
Manila Jockey Club	18	18	18	18	10,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.27	60,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp (Pdr)	44	44	43	43	314,900
Equitable PCI Bank-War	3.45	3.45	3.45	3.45	14,000
Jollibee Warrants	11.5	11.75	11.5	11.75	6,100
Omico Corp. Warrant	0.003	0.003	0.003	0.003	277,000,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series N	10	10	10	10	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series R	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	400
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	700
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	6	6	5.8	5.8	9,175,000
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	20,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.28	0.29	1,950,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.36	0.38	0.35	0.38	6,770,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	2.5	2.5	2.34	2.38	13,694,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2,400,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.6	6.7	6.5	6.7	1,646,000
Universal Rightfield Prop	0.105	0.105	0.1	0.105	2,800,000
MINING					
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	3.1	3.1	3	3	5,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines A	0.015	0.015	0.015	0.015	2,000,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.21	0.21	0.2	0.2	1,220,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.225	0.23	0.22	0.22	1,290,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	5,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.0065	0.0065	0.006	0.006	25,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	82,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	540,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.026	0.026	0.026	0.026	3,700,000
Interport Res.	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	3,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.005	0.005	0.005	0.005	11,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0048	0.0048	0.0048	0.0048	8,000,000
Pacifica	0.016	0.016	0.015	0.015	6,000,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.09	1,600,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.235	0.235	0.235	0.235	30,000

	SHARES	VALUE (P)
Banks & Fin Svc	541,810	48,240,710.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	616,364,380	192,215,965.00
PRO	38,455,000	105,958,230.00
Mining	117,055,000	1,238,550.00
OIL	33,330,000	451,150.00
GRAND TOTALS :	805,746,190	348,104,605.00

	AVERAGES		
Banks & Fin Svc	601.74	DOWN	9.65
Comm'l & Ind'l	2,079.95	DOWN	45.84
PRO	580.84	DOWN	20.36
Mining	1,301.03	DOWN	60.34
OIL	1.87	DOWN	0.02
All Shares Index	742.20	DOWN	23.74
Composite	1,526.40	DOWN	41.13

NO. OF ADVANCES: 5; NO. OF DECLINES: 78; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 32; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 115; NO. OF TRADES: 2,944

DISCLOSURES

TRANS-ASIA Oil and Energy Development Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on April 23, 3 p.m. at the New World Renaissance Hotel, Makati City. Stockholders of record as of March 23 will be entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

* * *

CROWN Equities Inc. announced the resignation of Tony King as director of the company.

* * *

ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on April 26, 8 a.m. at the ABS-CBN Broadcasting Center, Quezon City. Stockholders of record as of March 27 will be entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

* * *

SAN Miguel Properties Inc. moved its annual stockholders' meeting from April 3 to May 24.

* * *

BAGUIO Gold Holdings Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on May 2, 3 p.m. at the Park Ballroom of Century Park Sheraton Hotel in Manila. Stockholders on record as of March 26 will be entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

* * *

TANDUAY Holdings Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on May 2, 4 p.m. at the Kachina Room of Century Park Sheraton Hotel in Manila. Stockholders on record as of March 26 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

* * *

THE QUARTERLY cash dividend of **RFM Corp.** preferred shares will be payable on April 11 in favor of stockholders as of March 28 at a rate of P0.1154 per preferred share.

* * *

PHILIPPINE National Construction Corp. announced the resignations of Renato Valdecantos as chair, Rolando Macasaet as CEO and Erwin Tanunliong as member of the company's board. Elected chair and CEO was Luis Sison. ***Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research***

When bad news is bad news

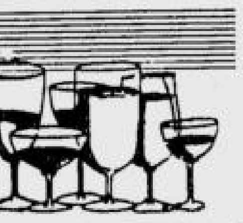
NEWSPAPERS thrive on bad news, unless the bad news is about the industry itself.

A New York Times article Monday captured the mood of the US newspaper industry with its headlined story, "Papers Struggle with Slowdown and Investor Expectations."

Amid declining revenues and increasing costs, newspapers across the continent, from the venerable New York Times to Silicon Valley's San Jose Mercury News, are planning editorial layoffs, cutting back on feature pages and regional weekly sections, and scrapping Sunday magazines altogether.

The main culprit is newsprint, which saw prices increase by 20 percent last year to $610 metric ton. Ironically, as newsprint cost was shooting up, the advertising base was steadily being whittled down as the dot.com craze flared out, slashing down help-wanted ads as well.

COCKTALES



By Victor C. Agustin

The bad news is, another $50/MT increase is due this month from newsprint suppliers.

Locally, the newsprint shock has already claimed one English broadsheet. The strengthening of the peso to 48-$1 from the Erap-discounted 54-$1 has given a breathing spell on two other dailies now on deathwatch.

Here at the INQUIRER, the declining profit share since 1998 has admittedly caused grumbling within the company, specially after the office grapevine placed this year's profit-sharing in the vicinity of P39,000 per employee.

The grumbling has reached a point that INQUIRER president Alexandra Prieto-Romualdez had to write an anguished open-letter to the employees.

"In 1999, it would have been easier for us to have issued an apology to Mr. Estrada during the boycott," Romualdez said, referring to the withdrawal of movie advertising placements initiated by industry friends of then President Estrada.

"It would have made better business sense to just print the good things about his administration."

"In fact, you can argue that we could make more money by reducing our circulation," she said.

The good news, she said, is that the improved business sentiment and the several cost-cutting measures (one of which was to print in Cebu and Davao, thereby slashing air freight costs) the paper is implementing should reverse the trend of decreasing profits.

Touchy-feely

STOCKBROKER Vivian Yuchengco, who has not been touched by publisher Teodoro "Dirty Finger" Locsin Jr. since their marriage broke up ages ago, "texted" Cocktales to dispute an item that appeared in this column Monday.

"Ted has no aversion 2 shaking hands & loves 2 eat anywer. Member Mindanao war? Slept w soldiers etc. Who told u unfair. TY," read the complete text message.

(For the record, what we said about Locsin was that he was averse to "being touched.")

Locsin, dubbed Dirty Finger for the middle-finger salute he gave in 1986 to protesting San Miguel employees, is running for Congress in Makati's first district against film producer/ex-censors chief Armida Siguion Reyna and social worker Melon Recto-Silverio.

Despite being friends with the Siguion Reynas, Yuchengco said she was committed to helping her former husband win.

Short takes

- JOLLIBEE has filed an application with the US authorities to open three stores in New York and New Jersey within the next two years.

The not-so-good news is, the six Jollibee outlets now operating in California still have to make money. Jollibee's US operations are expected to show profits only starting 2003, reported the Filipino Express of New Jersey, quoting Jollibee vice president for US operations Manolo Tingzon.

- INVESTORS who acquired Nikkei-indexed shares of stocks 15-16 years ago from the Tokyo market earned exactly zero, that is, zilch, gains from the acquisition. Japanese share prices are now back to 1985 level (and that has not factored inflation in).

Tokyo land prices, on the other hand, have fallen 65 percent since reaching peak in 1991.

Heard through the grapevine

FORMER Tourism Secretary Jose Antonio Gonzales has until next month to redeem the Mondragon House from Metrobank before the bank's foreclosure on the building becomes final.

(Cocktales may be reached by e-mail at cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or at cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)

Foreign debt drops to $46.8B

BY CLARISSA S. BATINO

THE COUNTRY'S foreign debt stock has slowed down by 10.4 percent or $5.41 billion to $46.8 billion in year 2000 from $52.21 billion a year ago despite a 19-percent drop in the value of the peso.

Compared to its level a quarter ago, the foreign debt slipped by 9.75 percent or by $5.05 billion from $51.85 billion in the third quarter last year, based on official documents.

Government sources attributed the decline in the foreign debt stock primarily to the continued rise in residents' investments in Philippine debt papers floated overseas.

External debt service as a percentage of exports of goods and services rose to 14.7 percent from 12.5 percent in 1999 and 12.1 percent in end-September last year.

Foreign debt stock as a percentage of gross national product had declined to 59 percent last year from a high of 64.7 percent the previous year. Total foreign obligations relative to exports of goods and services went down to 89.5 percent from 109 percent in 1999.

This means for every dollar earned from exports, about 89 US cents would be needed to pay off external obligations from more than $1 in previous years.

The foreign debt data captured by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas included foreign borrowings of the government and the private sector that were obtained with the central bank's approval.

The peso had weakened from about 43.50 to $1 in early July to past 45 in September. The peso had dipped to a low of 51.48 to $1 on Oct. 30 and slid further to a historic low of 54.79 to $1 early this year.

Based on a computation of the government, for every P1 depreciation against the greenback, foreign debt servicing goes up by P7 billion. On the other hand, a lower peso that could lead to a one percent rise in 91-day treasury bill rates, could increase the cost of domestic borrowings by P9 billion.

Last year, the maturity profile of the foreign borrowings of both the government and the private sector remained favorable given the continued efforts of the government to restructure loans by prolonging the maturity and keeping rates at the lowest possible levels.

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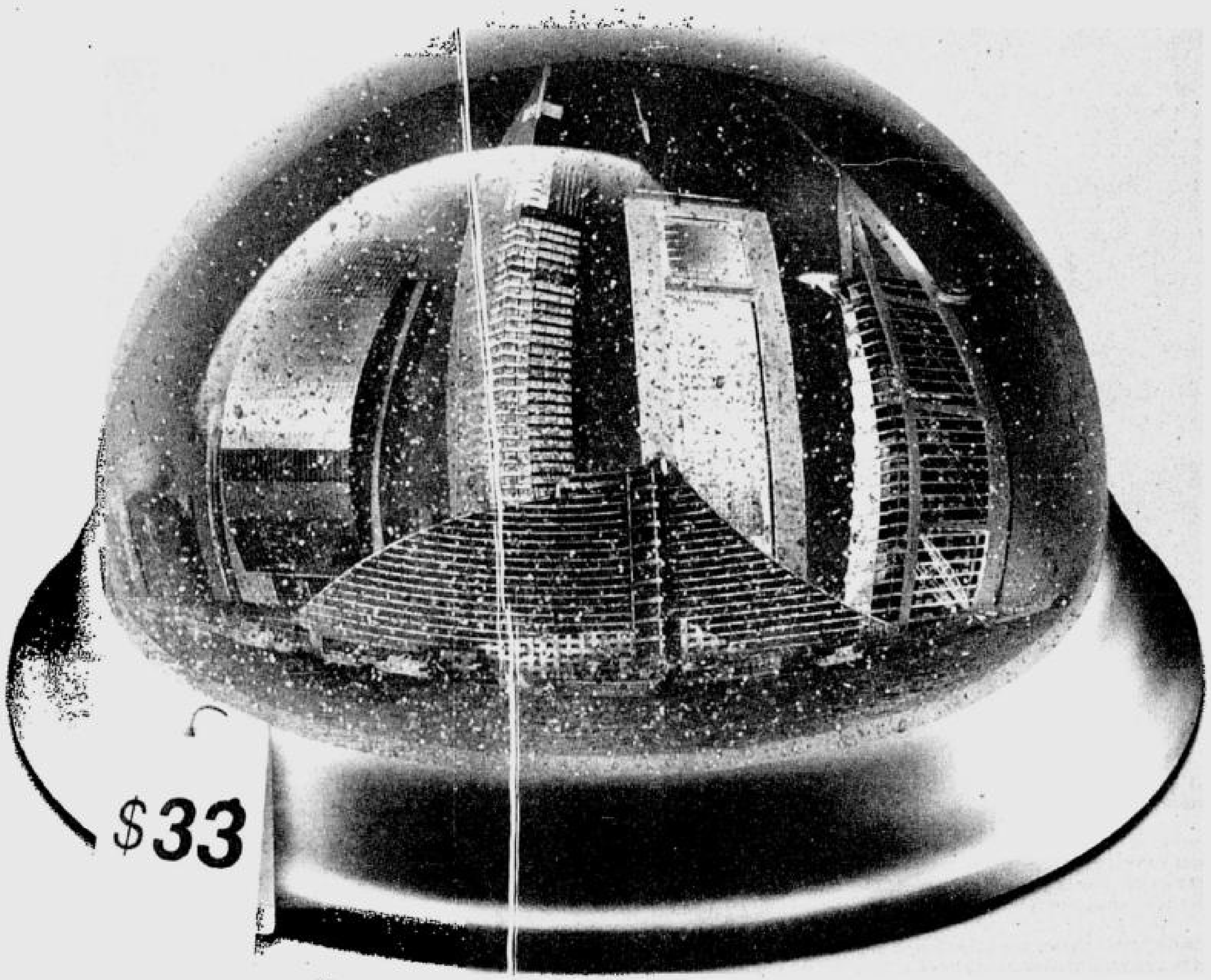
DUBAI SHOPPING FESTIVAL MARCH 2001



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MESSAGE

Year 2001 promises to be an exciting year for everyone. A new government and administration is in place, thanks to People Power II. There is renewed hope and optimism for the future of the country, buoyed by a leadership with a clear mandate for good governance. One founded on three pillars; "A sound moral foundation... a philosophy of transparency ... and an ethic of effective implementation."

As the voice of advertising industry, the Advertising Board of the Philippines is uniquely poised to play a major role in shaping human behavior, promoting the kind of values this country needs to forge ahead. Guided by truth, integrity, freedom and respect, the very same values we strive to uphold in the everyday practice of marketing, media and communications. TRUTH as the basis of any advertising message, INTEGRITY as the cornerstone of our business relationships, FREEDOM as the prerequisite to creativity, and RESPECT as the most binding aspect of our contract with consumers.

In this time of change in the spirit of active citizenship, the new leadership of the Advertising Board of the Philippines commits itself to further these principles not only in the practice of advertising, but also in its larger role as active contributors to economic progress and nation-building.

Susan C. Dimacali
SUSAN DIMACALI
CHAIRMAN

VISION

THE ADBOARD WILL BE RECOGNIZED AND RESPECTED AS THE VOICE OF THE ADVERTISING INDUSTRY IN THE PHILIPPINES.

A SELF-REGULATING BODY WHICH REPRESENTS AND PROTECTS THE INTERESTOF THE ADVERTISING COMMUNITY AND ITS ALLIED INDUSTRY SECTORS AS IT SAFEGUARDS THE WELFARE OF CONSUMERS.

A CHAMPION OF RESPONSIBLE, TRUTHFUL ADVERTISING AND THE HIGHEST STANDARDS OF FAIR PLAY AND PROFESSIONAL ETHICS.

IMAGE KEEPER OF ADVERTISING'S INVALUABLE ROLE IN ECONOMIC ACTIVITY AND VALUES FORMATION

MISSION

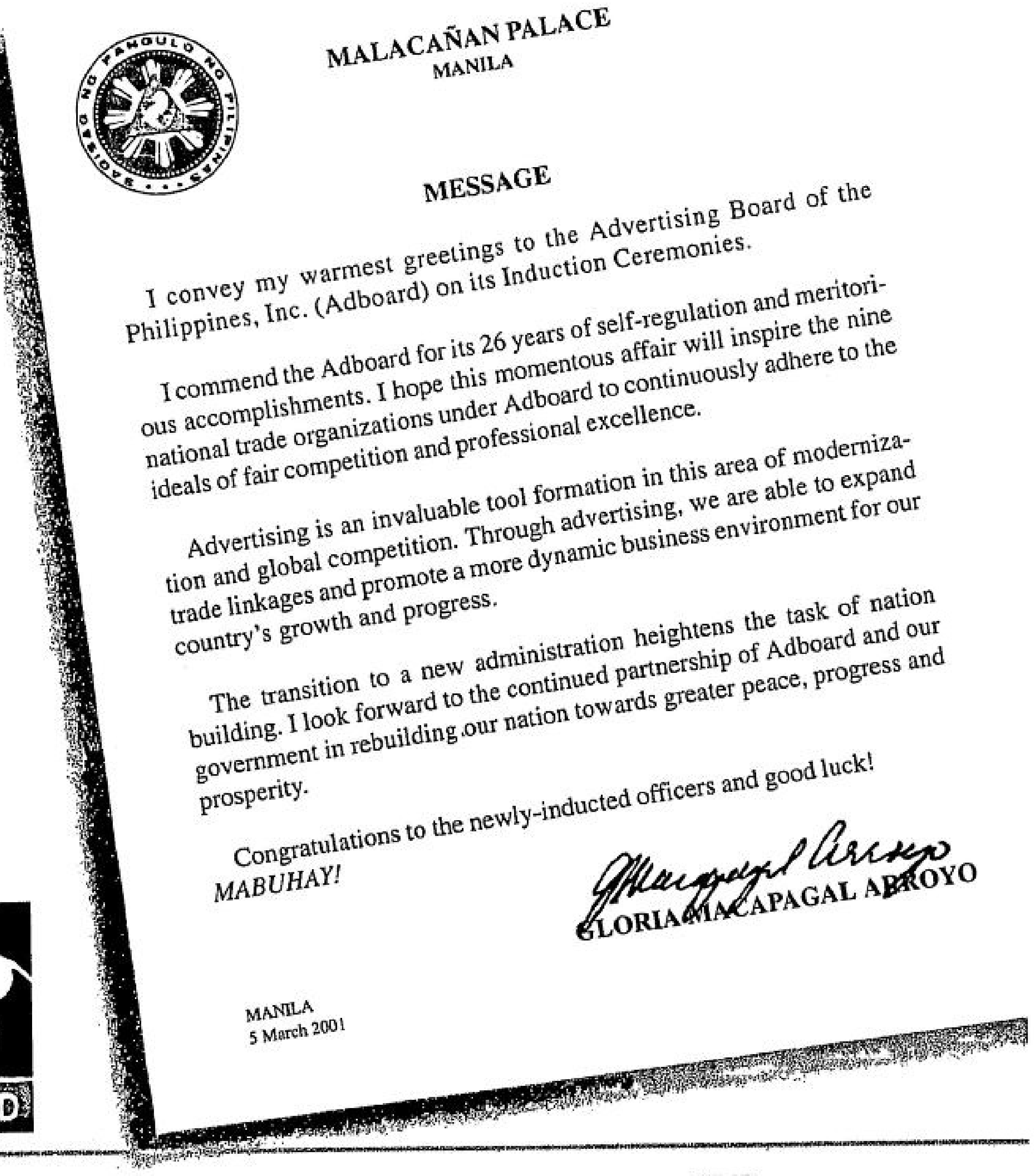
TO ACT AS THE COORDINATING BODY FOR SELF-REGULATION OF THE ENTIRE ADVERTISING INDUSTRY.

TO UPHOLD THE HIGHEST STANDARDS OF TRADE PRACTICES AND BUSINESS ETHICS AMONG THE ALLIED INDUSTRY SECTORS, PRESERVING HARMONY, UNITY AND COOPERATION AMONG THE SAME.

TO MAINTAIN PUBLIC CONFIDENCE IN ADVERTISED PRODUCTS AND SERVICES BY PROFESSIONALIZING THE PRACTICE OF ADVERTISING AND SAFEGUARDING TRUTH AND RESPONSIBILITY IN ADVERTISING.

TO FOSTER SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY, PROMOTE GOOD VALUES AND STRENGTHEN THE INDUSTRY'S IMAGE AS A VITAL CONTRIBUTOR TO ECONOMIC PROGRESS AND NATION BUILDING.

ADBOARD



MALACAÑAN PALACE
MANILA

MESSAGE

I convey my warmest greetings to the Advertising Board of the Philippines, Inc. (Adboard) on its Induction Ceremonies.

I commend the Adboard for its 26 years of self-regulation and meritorious accomplishments. I hope this momentous affair will inspire the nine national trade organizations under Adboard to continuously adhere to the ideals of fair competition and professional excellence.

Advertising is an invaluable tool formation in this area of modernization and global competition. Through advertising, we are able to expand trade linkages and promote a more dynamic business environment for our country's growth and progress.

The transition to a new administration heightens the task of nation building. I look forward to the continued partnership of Adboard and our government in rebuilding our nation towards greater peace, progress and prosperity.

Congratulations to the newly-inducted officers and good luck!

MABUHAY!

GMacapagal Arroyo
GLORIA MACAPAGAL ARROYO

MANILA
5 March 2001

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OPPOSITION EXPECTED

Creditors seen to approve NSC liquidation

By Elena R. Torrijos

NATIONAL Steel Corp. creditors are expected to approve this week the liquidation plan for the company as proposed by Securities and Exchange Commission-appointed NSC liquidator Danilo Concepcion.

In an interview, an official of one of NSC's major creditor banks said that the liquidation plan would be presented to the secured creditors today and to unsecured creditors tomorrow.

Last Tuesday, Concepcion gave a presentation to members of NSC's steering committee consisting largely of secured creditor-banks that hold NSC's Iligan plant as collateral.

"I think the only people who might put a monkey wrench (into the process) is Hottick Investment Ltd., the Malaysian majority owner of NSC," he added.

Hottick, on behalf of NSC, had asked the SEC to set aside the order to liquidate the steel company and instead, re-start talks about NSC's rehabilitation. This was, however, opposed by NSC's creditors.

Sources said that a local group was the only group that remained keen on investing into and operating NSC's Iligan plant. The prospective investor is currently holding talks with NSC's creditor-banks.

Under the proposed initial liquidation plan filed with the SEC, NSC's assets will be grouped into two categories such as plant assets and other assets that include real estate. The first category includes the Iligan steel plant and all facilities used in the operation of the plant. NSC's other assets include various fixed assets, inventory, accounts receivable and pieces of land in Iligan, Pasig, Bohol, Makati, Antipolo and Benguet.

The plant assets may be disposed through either an outright sale to an independent buyer or conveyed to a new operating company whose shares will be distributed among the creditors with whom the assets were mortgaged.

Under the second mode, the operating company owned by the creditor banks may opt to enter into a joint venture agreement with a partner who would be willing to contribute the capital needed to rehabilitate and operate the plant.

The other remaining assets of NSC will be sold through a combination of public auction and negotiated sale.

The total liabilities of NSC as of Sept. 30 was estimated at P19.1 billion, of which P9.59 billion was owed to secured creditors and P6.38 billion to other bank creditors. NSC also owes P1.7 billion to the government, P675 million to NSC employees and P811 million to other creditors.

GMA plans to abolish crisis agencies

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE MACAPAGAL administration is poised to abolish the Economic Mobilization Group as part of the ongoing overhaul of the Cabinet team handling economic policy.

Trade Secretary Manuel A. Roxas II said President Macapagal-Arroyo was bent on bringing back the Cabinet's original functions that have been taken over by various crisis bodies such as the EMG. Roxas said the abolition of the EMG would eliminate redundancies in the bureaucracy.

Roxas said the government would likely create more compact and more focused ad hoc bodies to address specific business problems such as customs delays, smuggling, and issues related to the rising costs of doing business in the Philippines.

Roxas said this meant that agencies tasked to handle these specific problems would be responsible for solving them as quickly as possible instead of tossing them to a multi-sectoral committee which would take over decision-making and policy-making duties.

The EMG is the joint government-private sector body formed by President Ramos in response to the Asian financial crisis. It was continued by President Estrada under his short-lived term where the EMG was tasked to address quickly the issues hounding businessmen.

The EMG has become the complaint body of last resort for businessmen who have become frustrated with the bureaucratic delays in solving petty to major problems in most government agencies.

The core members of the EMG were the executive secretary, Department of Trade and Industry, Department of Finance, Department of Agriculture, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, National Economic and Development Authority, Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Federation of Philippine Industries, Employers Confederation of the Philippines and Asian Institute of Management.

Garments sector supports reforms in quota system

LEADERS of the multibillion-dollar garments industry in the country have agreed to follow reforms in the allocation of quota to the United States outlined to them by Trade and Industry Secretary Mar Roxas.

Fractious until last year, garments manufacturers and exporters welcomed the Roxas formula which provides that the reallocation of export quota to the US will be in the form of incentives to outstanding performance.

Taking the unified stand in favor of the merit system of quota allocation were: the Confederation of Garment Exporters of the Philippines (Congep), The Garment Business Association of the Philippines (GBAP), the Foreign Buyers Association of the Philippines (Fobap), the Textile Millers Association of the Philippines (TMAP), and the Children's Apparel Association of the Philippines (Caap).

These associations represent a cross section of the industry from the suppliers of textile to representatives of buyers abroad.

The garments industry hauls in about $3.1 billion a year or roughly P150 billion and has maintained its No. 2 position, next to electronics, as the county's top dollar earner. It is made up of over 3,300 direct exporters and subcontractors employing half a million people.

The original reform package for the industry was floated by the Garments and Textile Export Board (GTEB) early last year to prepare local producers to the phase out of the quota system by the end of 2004. But some key players violently opposed the reform program.

Asked why key industry players have finally acceded to the reform program, Donald Dee, a long time Congep leader and chief advocate of reforming the quota system, said that they have seen not only Roxas' sincerity but his foresight and flexibility in allowing industry players to adjust to changes in the marketplace.

Dee cited the openness of the trade czar in relaxing present stringent requirements of the GTEB to allow individual exporters to meet their quotas and his foresight in anticipating that Philippine garments exporters could not survive the competition if they do not shift to higher end garments products before the quota system gets totally scrapped.

Performance will be based on productivity or the ability of manufacturers to produce more and better quality goods at lower costs, and market development, which will involve the participation in foreign trade exhibits and the opening up of new markets, preferably those which demand medium- and high-end products.

The US remains the chief destination of Philippine garments, absorbing eight out of every 10 dollar worth of goods the country exports. ***Abe P. Belena, Philexport News & Features***

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Solutions Expo Schedule

Time	Track 1 G/F Amphitheater	Track 2 4/F Veritas Amphitheater	Track 3 4/F Justitia Moot Court
7:30	Registration		
9:00	Ribbon Cutting		
9:30	Morning Coffee Break		
10:00–10:30	HP Session	Great Plains Session	APC Session
10:45–11:15	Enterprise Convergence at e-Business *ABM Computech*	Workflow, Imaging Solution for Exchange 2000 *Pericom Imaging Phils., Inc.*	*EPSON Session*
11:30–12:00	Rational Software – Engineering Best Practices Using the Rational Unified Process *Jupiter Systems, Inc.*	Chaos Has Left the Building: The Filenet Solution *Asian Business Solutions, Inc.*	The Digital Restaurant: Improving Service, Cutting Cost, and Making Profits *Systems Sciences Consulting, Inc.*
12:00–1:30	Lunch Break		
1:30–2:00	Impact Encore 5.0: Next Generation Enterprise *Syspro Philippines, Inc.*	Windows Based E-nterprise Interaction/ CTI Solution *Solutions 77, Inc.*	Planning, Budgeting and Analysis in the Digital Economy *IM2 Corporation*
2:15–2:45	Insurance Solution in the 21st Century *Software Ventures Int'l*	TeleVantage Software PBX + Parity Software (IVR) The Intelligent Phone System *Mediasoft Technologies Corp.*	Cognos Enterprise Business Intelligence-Enterprise Strategies for the Global Marketplace *Nexus Technologies, Inc.*
3:00–3:30	Infoserve: Enabling e-Business *Infoserve Int'l, Inc.*	Fully Integrated Solutions: TAMS, HRIS and Payroll Solutions *Navigator Systems, Inc.*	Leverage Information and Control in Process Mfg. *IM2 Corporation*
3:30–4:00	Afternoon Coffee Break		
4:00–4:30	Empowering Sales, Marketing and Support: Using Goldmine FrontOffice and SQL *Mannasoft Technology Corp.*	Automotive Dealer Management Solutions *Radix System Services Corp.*	
4:45–5:15	Globalfs - A New Generation Retail Banking Platform *Gentronics Philippines, Inc.*	Procure Flow: Internal Requisition *Leverage Systems Technologies, Inc.*	

Have some Back-to-School fun!

Microsoft TechNet Fair

Check out the booths at the TechNet fairgrounds from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

MWSS chief regulator runs a house split over water rates

SPECIAL REPORT

BY CHRISTINE A. GAYLICAN

(First of a series)

THE 25-YEAR water concessionaire agreement between the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System and two private groups—Manila Water Co. Inc. and Maynilad Water Services Inc.—is already on its fourth year.

Before turning five in August, the provisions of the agreement drawn up by the government and the private sector to regulate the water services industry in Metro Manila are now being carefully reviewed.

The Ayala-owned Manila Water and the Lopez-owned Maynilad want some provisions reviewed and changed. They are specifically seeking an automatic pricing mechanism that will reflect company financial losses on sudden currency fluctuations.

The two companies are getting their way, but it has so far come at a steep price for the MWSS Regulatory Office's new boss, Rex Tantiongco.

Different turf

For years, Tantiongco steered the Energy Regulatory Board through turbulent days when even the slightest increase in oil prices stirred up a transport and labor strike that paralyzed the country for days. That was when the oil industry was under state regulation, when petroleum was very much a political commodity.

After leaving the ERB, Tantiongco opted for a more sedate life in the private sector.

Last year, he decided to give public life another try. This time, though, he finds himself in a different turf and in a different struggle. As in his days as ERB chief, it is still a balancing act among the interests of the public, the government and big business. This time, however, he is up against some of his own people. He is running a divided house.

Tantiongco is MWSS' third chief regulator after Reynaldo Vea and Fernando Vicente. Vea served for only two years and was replaced by Vicente after former B-movie actor Joseph Estrada became president. Vicente, who had trouble dealing with his employees, left last year, citing health reasons.

In October last year, Tantiongco was named chief regulator of the MWSS. He brought with him a unique management style that insiders said lifted the morale of MWSS employees who had been dissatisfied with their previous bosses.

"He has a more hands-on approach and, for the first time, we see that the MWSS Regulatory Office is starting to have some direction and realization in implementing our mandate," a ranking MWSS official told the INQUIRER.

Que Cera, Cera

Not everyone, however, is a fan of the new chief regulator. Two deputy administrators, Virgilio Ocaya and Elena Luz Alojipan, have taken different positions from Tantiongco's.

"It is not that we oppose his every decision just for the mere function of argument. We have a basis for dissenting, especially on issues concerning the water tariffs that could directly affect consumers," Alojipan said.

Among the issues where Tantiongco have squared off with his deputy administrators were the transfer of MWSS' accounts from the Philippine National Bank to the Development Bank of the Philippines, non-renewal of a security agency's services, and allocation of about 6 percent of the concessionaires' stocks to their employees.

Tantiongco considers these as minor administrative matters. But for Ocaya and Alojipan, these are part of an internal conflict that boils down to the question of whether the MWSS Regulatory Office is following its mandate.

A critical issue in this internal conflict is an automatic currency exchange rate adjustment, or Cera, mechanism on water tariffs.

Manila Water and Maynilad are seeking a mechanism that will allow them to automatically adjust their prices in line with fluctuations in the peso-dollar exchange rate.

Alojipan, who evaluates the financial statements submitted by Manila Water and Maynilad, said Tantiongco has the habit of deciding on his own.

"What happened here is before the executive board of the MWSS Regulatory Office could even decide, in principle, if there is a need for this auto-Cera, he has already decided for us. The first thing he drafted when he assumed office is to work out how an auto-Cera could be put in place," she said.

Alojipan said while it was acceptable to explore the idea of installing an automatic pricing mechanism that would factor in the peso's weakness against the US dollar, it should be studied carefully.

Provisional increase

Tantiongco's move giving Manila Water a provisional authority to raise its rates by 18 centavos per cubic meter, now pending before the Court of Appeals, is also being questioned.

"His use of discretion here needs to be questioned because even before we at the financial management could evaluate the figures given by Manila Water a day after they were submitted, a resolution has already been made and need only to be signed," said Alojipan.

Documents obtained by the INQUIRER showed that Manila Water filed computations on how it would implement a rates hike on Jan. 9. Two days later, the executive committee led by Tantiongco issued a resolution approving Manila Water's computations.

Alojipan said she was on leave when the resolution was approved and when Tantiongco appointed himself concurrent manager of the finance group.

"I returned to work on Jan. 17 and saw the resolution. So as head of the financial group, I need to ask about details, especially the technical computations of this new basic rate adjustment of Manila Water," she said.

These triggered an exchange of more than 10 office memoranda between Tantiongco and his deputy administrators.

Tolerating dissent

The Ayala-owned Manila Water sought the intervention of an appeals panel in 1998 when it was granted only a 4-centavo-per-cubic-feet increase.

The appeals panel consisting of a representative from the International Chamber of Commerce, Michael Pryles, MWSS Regulatory Office nominee Jaime Laya and Manila Water's Baltazar Endriga raised it to 18 centavos per cubic meter. In October, the MWSS Regulatory Office challenged the panel's decision before the Court of Appeals.

MWSS deputy administrator Ocaya signed the resolution granting Manila Water an 18-centavo-per-cubic-meter increase but indicated his dissent in a footnote.

Ocaya, who is in charge of administrative management and services, said his decision had put him at odds with Tantiongco.

"He finds it hard for us always dissenting. Isn't that good for an organization? There's the needed check and balance for proper implementation of our functions," he said.

"We knew we should work together as a team but Tantiongco's directives is at times way out of line. He is no longer following the proper procedures as stated in the concessionaire agreement," Alojipan said.

Not inefficient

In response to these accusations, Tantiongco told the Inquirer: "You know my track record at the ERB. I had imperfections but inefficiency was not one of them. Not one in the ERB could say that a project was not accomplished or was half-baked. I found it hard seeing and working with people who are always opposing me."

The infighting between Tantiongco and his deputy administrators has split the MWSS Regulatory Office into two camps.

Tantiongco's supporters have kicked off a signature campaign seeking the ouster of Ocaya and Alojipan. They said two-thirds of the MWSS Regulatory Office's 58 employees were behind Tantiongco.

The MWSS board of trustees has tossed this question of leadership to the Office of the Government Corporate Counsel. *(To be continued)*

TURNOVER CEREMONIES JOHNNY VILLENA

Former Energy Secretary Mario Tiaoqui (right) hands over the reins of the Department of Energy to former Deutsche Bank AG country manager Jose Isidro Camacho. Looking on is Philippine Naitonal Oil Co. chief Sergio Apostol.

New BSP circular to correct BOP data

BY CLARISSA S. BATINO

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas has issued a circular tightening reportorial requirements that offshore banking units must comply with to plug loopholes in the computation of the country's balance of payments.

The new circular will also help the government track down suspicious accounts in relation to its campaign against money laundering.

The BSP said it would treat offshore banking units as resident institutions only for the purpose of compiling and synchronizing financial statistics with international standards.

The central bank said it would use the International Monetary Fund's balance of payments manual in establishing a standard for computing the country's external accounts.

A country's balance of payments refers to a systematic record of all economic transactions between residents of that country and those of other countries.

There can be no surplus or deficit in a country's balance of payments as a whole—as distinguished from its balance of trade—because every payment must have its offsetting receipt.

The balance of payments of the Philippines, for example, records the various ways in which the peso is made available to foreigners through Philippine purchases of foreign goods, expenditures of Filipino tourists abroad, donations, loans, etc. These expenditures are shown on the debit side of the balance. The receipts side indicates the various uses to which foreigners put the pesos they receive, such as purchases of Philippine goods, interest on Philippine loans, etc. If foreigners do not spend all the pesos made available to them, the balance of payments will show on the credit side an increase of foreign-held peso balances, foreign purchases of Philippines securities, gold exports from the Philippines, or some similar item.

The IMF has expressed doubts on the accuracy of economic growth figures being released by the Philippines due to lax reporting systems.

The Fund is particularly concerned over how net unclassified items—or errors and omissions—in the Philippines' balance of payments data have been yielding a deficit that the central bank largely attributes to a lag in the reporting of export earnings.

As a result, the level of errors and omissions has increased to $3.58 billion as of end-November last year from $3.45 billion in the same period the previous year.

The BSP's new circular will require new data from offshore banking units.

These include a data of investments in bonds and other debt instruments in original currencies and their US dollar equivalent, a report on the liabilities of offshore banking units to non-residents, and details of investment receipts and disbursements.

PNOC-PPDC naphtha project delayed anew

BY RONNEL W. DOMINGO

THE PHILIPPINE National Oil Co. said Monday the signing of a joint-venture agreement for a $600-million naphtha cracker project would again be delayed.

"We have to work faster on this, but we can't really move fast since the (energy) secretary is new at his job," PNOC chair Sergio Apostol told reporters.

Former investment banker Jose Isidro Camacho officially took the helm of the Department of Energy on Monday.

In an earlier interview, Apostol said he expected the PNOC-Philippine Petrochemical Development Corp. and 11 other firms to sign an agreement on a new naphtha cracker facility this month.

Apostol said groundbreaking in Bataan would definitely take place on April 8.

PNOC-PPDC is the project's lead proponent with a 34-percent stake.

The naphtha cracker facility will have a capacity of about 350,000 to 500,00 metric tons a year.

Taipan John Gokongwei Jr. has dusted off JG Summit Petrochemical Corp.'s plan to build the country's first naphtha cracker plant in view of the continuing indecision of the PNOC-PPDC consortium to build this key petrochemical facility.

The Board of Investments has approved Gokongwei's petition to keep active JG Summit's registration for its $600-million naphtha cracker project approved three years ago.

BOI executive director Elmer Hernandez said JG Summit merely wanted to keep its options open in case the government-led consortium's plan to build a naphtha cracker would not push through. The BOI allows an extension of a registered project's implementation period on a case-to-case basis.

Hernandez said the naphtha cracker, which produces the monomer used as base material of plastic resin makers, has to be set up by 2004, when a shortage in plastic raw materials is expected to set in across the region. The Philippines is the only country in Southeast Asia without a naphtha cracker and has remained totally dependent on international sources.

PLDT, CBCP Internet startup sign access deal

BY ANTHONY O. ALCANTARA

THE PHILIPPINE Long Distance Telephone Co. has agreed to provide the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines Inc. Network Corp. a broadband connection to the Internet's backbone in the United States.

The agreement involves a monthly lease of between P10 million and P20 million for a broadband connection to the facilities of California-based MCI UUNet, which operates part of the Internet's backbone.

Alfredo Panlilio, PLDT corporate business group head, said in a statement issued yesterday that there was a strong synergy between PLDT and CBCPNet.

"With PLDT's thrust of providing excellent high-end broadband data services and CBCP's strong determination to bring the latest in communications technology to even the remotest locations, we are positive this partnership will yield fruitful results," he said.

The company declined to reveal the exact amount involved in the contract because of a non-disclosure clause.

CBCPNet chief executive Eman Lim said CBCPNet was planning to set up cafes around the country to give remote areas in the countryside access to the Internet.

"This business deal with PLDT will surely boost our strong role for information technology in expanding the reach of the church. We intend to wire up every diocese, parish house and parochial school in the country," he said.

Under the agreement, PLDT will provide a link with a capacity of 45 megabits per second to CBCPNet.

At present, 70 to 80 percent of the country's major Internet service providers use PLDT's facilities that provide high-speed Internet access.

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SEMBLANCE OF PANIC

Technology stocks feeding US market fears

NEW YORK—While investors for months have been selling on fears about slumping earnings projections and the slowing economy, on Monday they sold on fear itself.

As often happens when the market slips beneath a nice round number, like the Nasdaq index's 2,000, "the negative sentiment seems to be feeding on itself," said Charles White, a portfolio manager at Avatar Associates. .

The Nasdaq finished Monday down 129.40 at 1,923.38, nearly 62 percent off its peak of a year ago, and the selling spilled over to the Dow industrials, which plunged 436.37 to 10,208.25.

"We are getting some semblance of panic here," said Ricky Harrington, a technical analyst for Wachovia Securities.

But with chips, the personal computer and fiber-optics a part of life that isn't likely to disappear, why all the worry about the future of tech stocks?

The answer is painfully simple, say analysts like White and Harrington. Prices are still too high and earnings are too low and are expected to remain lousy all year.

Even the biggest, safest tech stocks like Intel Corp. and Cisco Systems Inc. are too pricey, analysts say. For proof, investors needn't look further than the grim outlooks and layoffs the chip and semiconductor makers announced last week, igniting this latest big selloff.

"These are good companies but good companies get overvalued," Harrington said.

Given the tech sector's stellar run-up followed by its pitiful plunge, market professionals admit it's hard these days to determine what's a good price for tech bellwethers. The prices look cheap when compared with last year's highs. Intel's Monday closing price of $27.75, for example, was down about 77 percent from its March 10, 2000, price of $120.19.

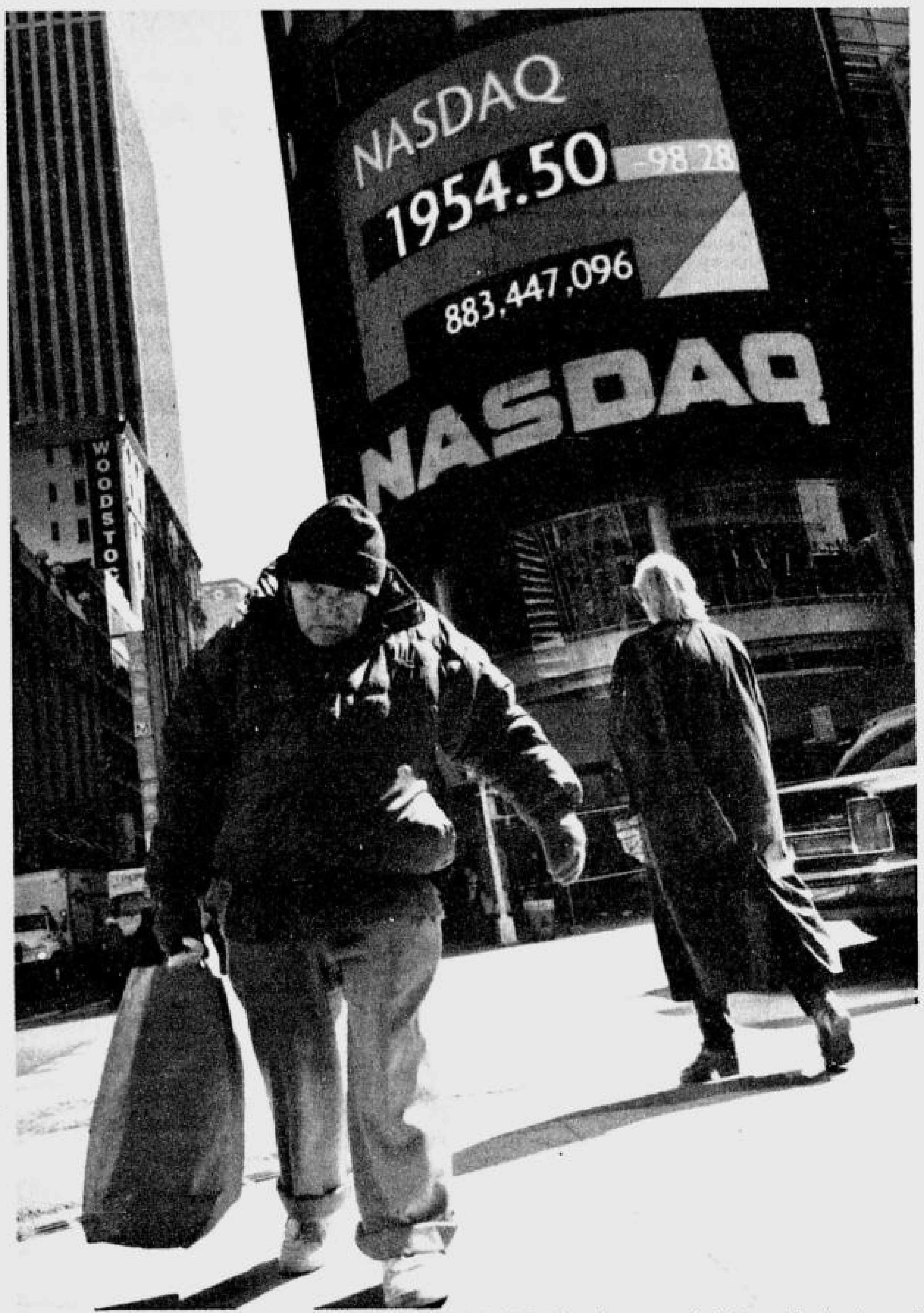
Although Intel's price-to-earnings ratio, or the amount investors pay per share for a company's earnings, has come down to 29 from 100 or more, that's still too steep, said White, who added he's not sure what would be an appropriate ratio.

"(Intel) can't even tell you how long it's going to be (until the stock price moves higher) and it's still trading at 29 times earnings," he said.

Investors had thought big names like Intel, the so-called blue chips of the tech sector, were immune to the slowing economy and waning consumer spending, which helped put lesser companies with even skimpier or nonexistent earnings—namely dotcoms—under.

But market observers say the market now sees the tech sector's problems aren't so limited and that it just took longer for the sturdier companies to suffer along with the rest of the sector.

"People are now realizing that Cisco and Intel were exposed to the rest of the tech sector's problems. A lot of their customers were the old dotcoms and the whole industry is shrinking," said Charles Jones, professor of finance at Columbia University's graduate school of business. *AP*



PEDESTRIANS walk past the Nasdaq MarketSite in New York. The Nasdaq composite index on Monday dropped below 2,000 for the first time in 27 months as investors, uneasy about the prospects for a quick economic recovery, again punished technology stocks. AP

Experts mull US trade gap impact on dollar

WASHINGTON—A gradual decline in the value of the dollar because of the huge US trade deficit probably would not hurt international capital markets, a leading US financial industry official said Monday.

"I do not think a weaker dollar is necessarily bad for capital markets if it's done in an orderly way," Robert Hormats, vice chair of Goldman Sachs International, said during a panel discussion on the US trade deficit for goods, which hit a record $449.5 billion in 2000.

Hormats and other experts on the panel noted that a number of factors contributed to the record deficit.

These included the attractiveness of the US market to foreign investors and stronger economic growth in the United States than in the rest of the world, they said.

Because of an economic slowdown in the United States and better investment opportunities in Europe, the dollar could decline in value compared to the euro over the next year, they said.

As long as that happens in an orderly manner, it should not cause problems for capital markets, according to Hormats.

However, any sudden or sharp drop in the value of the dollar because foreign investors had lost confidence in the US market would be a much bigger headache, he added.

Robert Litan, director of economic studies at the Brookings Institution, acknowledged the large trade deficit increased US vulnerability to a "dollar strike" by foreign investors.

But that had not happened so far despite predictions going back to the early 1980s, Litan said.

Litan also noted that congressional approval of President George W. Bush's proposed $1.6-trillion tax cut could increase the trade deficit by giving a boost to US economic growth and investment opportunities.

Murray Weidenbaum, a top economic advisor during the Reagan administration, argued reducing the trade deficit should not be a target of US economic policy. *Reuters*

Food exports to Asia tipped to top A$12B

CANBERRA, Australia—Australian agricultural exports to Asia are set to top A$12 billion ($6.1 billion) annually, according to figures released yesterday.

The Supermarket to Asia Council said it recorded a 13-percent increase in meat and other exports to Asia in the last three months of 2000, which followed a strong 18-percent improvement in the September quarter.

While cumulative figures for exports to date in the 2000-2001 fiscal year were not available, the council said the upward growth suggested exports to Asia would hit A$12 billion ($6.1 billion) by yearend at June 30, 2001.

In the 1999-2000 fiscal year, total exports to Asia were A$11.4 billion ($5.8 billion), the council said.

Council executive director Jim Kennedy said strong performances in dairy, meat and horticulture exports were the result of economic recovery in Asia, a low Australian dollar and improved productivity in the food manufacturing industry.

The council said Japan remained Australia's largest single food market, accounting for 21 percent of exports. Australia was the third-largest food exporter to Japan, accounting for 7 percent of all exports behind the United States and China.

Yet despite Australia's strong performance in Japan, Kennedy said Australia needed to maintain pressure on market access, tariff and quarantine issues to keep its market share.

Australia is also lagging in the Japanese wine market, claiming just 2 percent of market share. France accounts for 55 percent of the Japanese wine market. *AP*

Carlsberg A/S shedding side lines, getting back to basics

COPENHAGEN, Denmark—Carlsberg A/S, the world's fifth largest brewery group, is reinventing itself as it struggles to keep its leading position amid stiff international competition.

The company is expanding in key markets and ridding itself of non-core businesses, including its large ownership stake in Copenhagen's famed Tivoli Gardens amusement park. And because people in Western Europe are drinking more wine and less beer, Carlsberg has cast its eye on growing markets in Asia, Eastern Europe, Russia and Ukraine.

"From being the biggest in Denmark, we have become a leading brewer worldwide," spokeswoman Margrethe Skov said. "Now we have to stay there."

Last month, the company reported global sales of $4.4 billion for the 15 months ended Dec. 31, with a net profit of about $269 million. Both sales and earnings were up from the preceding year, though the fifth quarter was flat in terms of revenue.

The extended reporting period allowed Carlsberg to orient its fiscal year with the calendar year beginning in 2001.

Carlsberg, whose brands include Carlsberg and Tuborg, controls about 70 percent of the Danish beer market, though some 90 percent of its sales are abroad.

It was founded in 1847 by JC Jacobsen, who learned how to make lager beer in Bavaria and returned home to Copenhagen to convert ale-drinking Danes to the lighter, fizzier brew. In its first year of existence, his company—named after his son Carl and "berg," the Danish word for hill—produced some 1 million bottles.

The company now produces 750,000 bottles of beer daily and has 22,000 employees in 100 subsidiaries and associated companies around the world. Its other businesses include soft drinks, packaging, porcelain and silverware.

The intensified focus on brewing has received a thumbs-up from analysts, who say consolidation is needed within the beer industry because the top companies, led by Anheuser-Busch Cos., carry so much weight.

"The landscape in the brewing world is changing a lot these days," said Andrew Gowan, who follows the industry for Lehman Brothers in London. "It has become increasingly difficult to sit in between those who are consolidating and those who are being consolidated."

Carlsberg shares dropped about 15 percent on the Copenhagen Stock Exchange after the company reported its earnings. Analysts said investors were dissatisfied with the flat growth rate in the fifth quarter of the extended fiscal year.

"We had expected some more growth in the results," said Stig Nymann, an analyst with Sydbank. *AP*

WTO chief sees signs of weakness

LONDON—World Trade Organization director general Michael Moore has expressed concern over the outlook for the global economy, the Independent newspaper reported yesterday.

"The world economy is showing signs of vulnerability," Moore was quoting as telling an audience at the European Business School in London on Monday.

"The threat is that a recession in America could export trouble to the rest of the world."

Recalling the protectionism that triggered the 1930s depression, he urged the launch of a new round of global trade talks this year, the paper said.

Moore told Reuters on Sunday that he hoped the agenda for a new round of talks would be settled by July.

"The virtuous circle of trade liberalization and economic growth could all too easily become a vicious spiral of protectionism and stagnation," he said. *Reuters*

China WTO entry reaches 'final stages'

BEIJING—Farm subsidies remain a sticking point as China moves closer to joining the World Trade Organization, while a global economic slowdown will drag on the country's export growth, according to China's trade minister.

China was in the "final stage" of wrapping up its 14-year bid to join the Geneva-based global trade body as its negotiators entered last-minute talks with other WTO members over a handful of leftover issues, Shi Guangsheng told reporters.

While he shied away from setting a specific date, Shi said the outcome of the talks "is already a foregone conclusion."

Among the sticking points, he said, were China's price supports for farmers, subsidies for industry and additional market-opening measures in the country's service sector.

He signaled China's reluctance to meet the demands of the United States and other countries to remove all protections for domestic producers, saying China was still not ready to compete head-to-head with the world's most advanced nations.

"Some members have made their requests on China too high. These requests exceed China's capacity as a developing country," the head of the Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation Ministry told reporters.

China has requested developing-nation status, which would give it greater freedom to support its farmers under WTO rules. Some countries believe this will give China an unfair competitive edge over their farm exports.

China has already completed bilateral negotiations with most WTO members, with talks moving into the final phase of hammering out a legal document to specify the conditions of China's entry.

China's farm subsidies have attracted the most criticism.

Shi said China sent a team to Washington last week to meet with the US trade office on the sensitive issue of agricultural subsidies, though he said they had yet to reach an agreement.

Shi also denied claims by some US farm groups that China was using customs inspections and quarantine to block the import of US wheat, barley and citrus fruits. *AP*

Motorola stumbles into big trouble

CHICAGO—Inside a two-story building next to its suburban Schaumburg, Illinois, headquarters, Motorola Inc.'s deep troubles are invisible among the glass showcases displaying its rich and innovative history.

The first car radio. The portable "handie-talkie" developed for US troops in World War II. The transponder that relayed Neil Armstrong's first words from the moon. The first cellular phone.

It's a jarring contrast with today's dismal scenario of vanishing profits, sales in free-fall and almost monthly rounds of layoffs and plant closures.

Motorola bumbled through the recent period of runaway worldwide growth in its primary business—wireless phones—by failing to connect with consumers like its leaner, quicker Finnish rival, Nokia Corp.

And now, with first-time buyers dwindling and users putting replacement purchases on hold, experts say the company may be too late to the party with a series of more advanced phones due out over the next few months.

"If the economy's slowing and there's not a lot of money out there, why would people upgrade their phones?" says Ari Bensinger, a communications equipment analyst for Standard & Poor's. "They're going to wait."

Motorola's 73-year-old existence isn't threatened—the company has plenty of cash and many assets it could sell to raise more. What's in jeopardy are its diminishing role in the cell phone industry and the hefty market share it left behind in the 20th century.

Unlike other technology companies battling a slowdown in 2001, many say Motorola is largely to blame for its current woes.

"It's not the economy's fault, it's their fault," says Vivian Mamelak, an analyst for Arnhold and S. Bleichroeder. "They were slipping even in an up cycle in the wireless handset industry. Now that we're in a down cycle, their weaknesses are really exposed."

A decade or less ago, Motorola sold more than half the world's cell phones. By the fourth quarter of 2000, they held only a 13-percent market share to 34 percent for Nokia, according to the Gartner Dataquest research firm.

The company's recent blunders are many, dating back to before the founder's grandson, Christopher Galvin, took over as chair and chief executive in 1997.

First, Motorola underestimated the impact of digital technologies in the mid-'90s and was slow to develop them.

It made unwise investments along the way—most notably the multibillion-dollar Iridium satellite-phone project, which became obsolete and went bankrupt.

It spent so much time focusing on the competition in Asia; analysts said, that it was out-muscled by Nokia in the lucrative European market.

And after pursuing the wrong strategy by developing fancy Internet-access phones that proved too expensive for consumers, it fumbled the switch to cheaper phones. Too many different phone models with too little overlap of parts added up to slow, costly production.

In short, Motorola hasn't shown it can swiftly and profitably produce the phones that today's consumers want.

"No one's ever questioned the fact that Motorola phones are fine," says Todd Bernier, an analyst for Chicago-based Morningstar Inc. "But it doesn't matter if you can play games or send e-mail or recite the Bible on your phone. It doesn't matter if it's the best phone out there if people don't buy it."

Investors have hung up on Motorola, too, as it careens toward its first quarterly operating loss since 1985. Its stock has lost three-quarters of its value in the past year—a market capitalization of $133 billion last March has shrunk to less than $37 billion.

So, barely two years after cutting 20,000 jobs and taking a $1-billion loss in 1998, the company is slashing costs again with an eye toward boosting its measly profit margins. *AP*

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INQUIRER TRiViA

By BONG BARRAMEDA

One for the birds?

On November 9, 1979, a nuclear alert lasting six minutes was sounded off by the US Strategic Air Command Headquarters in Colorado, and US jet interceptors took off from their bases under standing orders to attack and destroy what was perceived to be a wave of enemy missiles approaching the American east coast. Neither President Jimmy Carter nor the Joint Chiefs of Staff were informed of the situation. It turned out to be a false alarm, and the later official explanation for the alert was that a test tape containing a warning of a simulated Soviet missile attack, which was being played by the North American Air Defense Command (NORAD) for training purposes, was accepted as authentic by interceptors.

In a real alert the US President then would have from 20 to 24 minutes to determine a course of action before the missiles hit their targets. Besides the official explanation there were consistent reports that the sudden and dangerous incident was caused by a flight of flocking birds picked up by radar. Although most flights of birds are not dense enough to be confused with ICBMs or aircraft, certain flocks of blackbirds, cowbirds or starlings, massed together in one or several huge flights, and each following a rough V-pattern, might suggest on radar that something of considerable size was approaching.

For the Record. At the height of the Cold War, it was reported that the US possessed nuclear capacity to destroy every Soviet city of over 100,000 people 36 times, while the Soviets could destroy every US city of over 100,000 population 12 times.

Past Forward. This day in 1947: The RP-US Military Bases Agreement was signed by President Manuel A. Roxas and US High Commissioner Paul V. McNutt. It allowed the United States to continue maintaining the military bases and stations it established in the country during the American and Japanese Occupations. The leases ended in September 1991.

WORD WATCH

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PDI -- March 14, 2001

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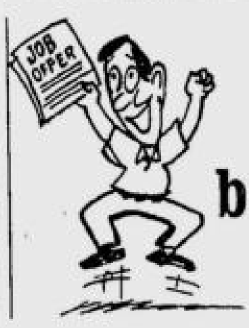

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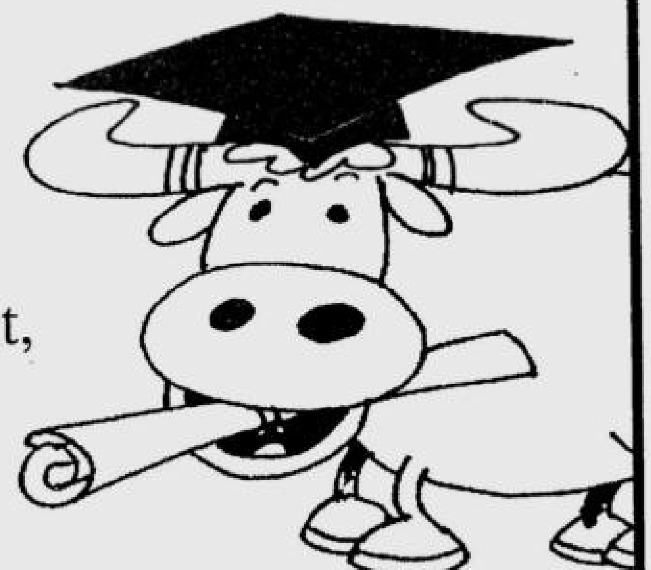

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INVITATION TO BID

The DOH-Center for Health Development for Cagayan Valley hereby invites interested suppliers to provide drugs and medicines, medical, laboratory and dental supplies to this Office.

Interested suppliers who can provide the above-mentioned items may obtain documents from the Secretariat upon presentation of the original and photocopy of DOH Certificate of Suppliers Accreditation, License to Operate, Certificate of Product Registration and upon payment of a non-refundable bidding fee of P800.00.

1. Pre-qualification and issuance of bid/tender documents	**March 26 to March 30, 2001 12:00 p.m.**
2. Pre-bid conference	**March 30, 2001 (1:00 p.m.)**
3. Submission and opening of bids	**April 18, 2001 (9:00 a.m.)**

Venue:

DOH-Center for Health Development for Cagayan Valley
Carig, Tuguegarao City
Main Conference Hall

The DOH-CHD for Cagayan Valley reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any formality in the bids received or to accept such bids as maybe advantageous and responsive to the needs of this Office. For more details, call 844-1748 Secretariat.

(Sgd.) **MERCEDITAS V. CAVANEYRO, MD, MPH, MPA, CESO III**
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(PDI – March 12, 13 & 14, 2001)

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The Board of Directors
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of
UNITED SPECIAL WATCHMAN AGENCY, INC.
deeply mourn the passing away of

ATTY. PACIFICO P. MIJARES

Founder

His remains lie at A-2, La Funeraria Paz, G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be at Holy Cross Memorial Park, Quezon City on Sunday, March 18, 2001 after the 9:00 a.m. Holy Mass.

"My soul finds rest to God alone;
for me Him comes my salvation"

Our Dearly Beloved

ATTY. JOAQUIN R. ANDRES, SR.

Born August 16, 1906

Peacefully joined his Creator on March 12, 2001 at the age of 94.

His late wife **Amparo** (†); loving children and in-laws **Junior** (†) & **Lydia, Rosie, Malyn & Jay, Anton & Kate, Mitz** and **Ting & Virgle**; grandchildren **Jeremy, Patrick, Tyrone, Mark Anthony, Terence, Warren** and **Jason**, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Marian Memorial Chapels, Inc. Marcos Highway, Antipolo City. Tel. 645-1845 / 1855 local 16.

Interment will be in Lallo Cemetery, Lallo, Cagayan.

The Congregation of the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary announced the passing into eternal life and into the arms of her Creator of

SISTER CARMEN A. USON, ICM

On March 13, 2001 at the age of 82.

The Congregation, her family **Nena** and **Jose G. Ponce, Armando** (†) and **Lourdes de Jesus Uson, Ercy** and **Armando Ampil, Glory** and **Rene, Noel**; nieces and nephews and other relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at Queen of Peace Convent, #61 Banawe Street, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Thursday, March 15, 2001 after the 9:00 a.m. Mass at Queen of Peace Convent.

DIOSDADA FELIX DE GUZMAN

Former Principal of Juan Luna, Benitez and Legarda Elementary Schools

Passed away peacefully on March 12, 2001 at the age of 85.

Her son **Pancho**; daughter-in-law **Wynne**; and grandsons **Luigi, Franco**, and **Iñaki** request your prayers for her eternal rest.

Her remains lie at Loyola Memorial Chapels in Guadalupe.

Interment will be on Friday, March 16 at North Cemetery after a Requiem Mass at nine in the morning.

PRESENTACION J. ZABALA

Died peacefully at the age of 87 on March 11, 2001

Her beloved children **Rene** (†), **Estela, Washington** and **Jun**; daughters-in-law **Weny, Vioiy** and **Beth**; grandchildren, great grandchildren, brothers, sisters, nephews and nieces, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body lies at the Ambassador Funeral Homes, A. Mabini Street, corner C-3 Caloocan City.

Interment will be on Thursday, March 15, 2001 at La Loma Catholic Cemetery after the 2:00 p.m. Mass.

TOMAS S. TALENS

Died on March 10, 2001 at the age of 74

Body lies in state at
Funeraria Dulce, Abad Santos, Manila.
Interment will be on March 15, 2001, 9:00 a.m.
at La Loma Cemetery.

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Precious in the sight of the Lord
Is the death of His Saints.
Psalm 116:15

EMILIO STA. ANA MIGUEL, SR.

Pasig City

Peacefully went to his Lord on March 11, 2001 at the age of 81.

He is survived by his beloved wife **Bining**; children **Emilio, Jr.** and **Grace, Nathaniel** and **Raquel, Santy** and **Alice, Emilyn** and **Mike Domancich, Ronaldo** and **Felicitas**; and grandchildren **Ethel, Sharmaine, Christine Gail, Philip Jules, Paul Nathan, Denisse Joyle, Michael James, Thomas Julian.**

His remains lie in state at Arlington East The Garden Chapels, C. Raymundo Avenue, Pasig City.

Interment will be on Saturday, March 17, 2001 after the 3:00 p.m. service at The Evergreen Memorial Garden, C. Raymundo Avenue, Pasig City.

"Come to Me, all you who are weary
and burdened, and I will give you rest."
Matthew 11:28

AMADO DELA CRUZ ARIAS

of Ibaan, Batangas and Caloocan City

Passed away in the Grace of our Lord on March 13, 2001 at the age of 76.

His bereaved wife Andrea, sons Benjamin, Rolando, Constantino, Antonio, Manuel, daughters-in-law Grace, Lydia, Emily, Benny, Jessie, grandchildren, Giancarlo, Princess, Baron, Paul, Erwin, Jenina, Mimi, other relatives and friends request the pious readers to join them in praying for the eternal repose and happiness of his soul.

His body lies in state at 111 Isagan Street, Caloocan City.

Interment will be on Saturday, March 17, 2001 at 9:30 a.m. at the Himlayang Pilipino, Tandang Sora, Quezon City.

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only
begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him
shall not perish but have everlasting life."
John 3:16

People, Events & Products

Aries B. Espinosa, Assistant Editor
E-MAIL: aespinosa@inquirer.com.ph
sprojects@inquirer.com.ph

Tuna processing facility inaugurated in GenSan

PHILBEST Canning Corporation, the latest addition to the growing businesses of RD Corporation, was inaugurated Feb. 17 in simple ceremonies, but with a grand vision "to put the Philippines in the tuna world map."

RD Corporation president and CEO Rodrigo E. Rivera, Sr. said during the inauguration that "while the tuna industry is experiencing some difficulty, RD, on the other hand, has been aggressive as proven by the establishment of Philbest Canning Corporation."

The manufacturing plant, which will employ 1,500 officers and associates, has the capacity to produce over 1.6 million cases of canned tuna per year.

Philbest Canning Corporation is a wholly owned Filipino corporation based in Gen. Santos City in Southern Mindanao and is engaged in tuna processing for export in the United States and European markets. Philbest's product lines consist of two varieties of canned tuna: size 307 for retail and size 603 for food service products. Of the seven tuna canneries in the Philippines, Philbest is the only fully integrated cannery since all its raw tuna materials are supplied by its sister companies: the RD Fishing Industry, Inc., the RD Tuna Ventures Inc., and the South Sea Fishing Ventures Phils., Inc.

Stik-O now made even longer

HERE'S great news for all kids and parents who are Stik-O wafer stick fun snack lovers. Ecco Food Corporation introduces its new Stik-O XL with a bigger and longer Stik-O Wafer stick. This "extra long" Stik-O XL will surely bring more fun to all children and adults because it is made even tastier and crunchier.

There are a lot of flavorful choices that will suit your discriminating taste, such as strawberry, mocha, choco, melon, ube, buko pandan and vanilla.

So, what are you waiting for? Taste and enjoy new Stik-O XL—affordably priced and available at your nearest groceries, supermarkets and favorite sari-sari stores nationwide.

For more details, visit Ecco Food Corp. at 8th Avenue, 8th St., Caloocan City or call 361-0351 and 361-5446.

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Sta Elena Golf & Country Club
December 5, 2000
Tech

CLUB AT THE HYATT ANNUAL GOLF TOURNEY

Club at the Hyatt, the loyalty program of Hyatt Regency Manila, held its annual golf tournament recently at the Sta. Elena Golf & Country Club in Cabuyao, Laguna. Shown in photo are the winners of the event with officials of Tele Tech Marketing Communications Inc., marketing agent for Club at the Hyatt privilege card. From left: Ernesto Martinez and Marites Pamintuan from Tele Tech, Jose Mari Cacho, Sam Esguerra, Kazo Ito, Francis Monedero, Juan Guerrero and Genny Puno, marketing communications manager of Hyatt Regency Manila. The Club at the Hyatt Ballroom Dancing night is next—on April 5 at the Hyatt Regency Manila. Call 833-1234, Club at the Hyatt customer service information.

BRANCH OF THE YEAR HONORED

House of Sara Lee, one of the country's top direct selling companies, recently bestowed the prestigious branch of the year award to its Cebu branch during its 8th Annual Convention held at The Manila Hotel. Shown in photo are, from left: HoSL general manager Ricky Sy, chief finance officer direct selling division- worldwide Bob Mason, Cebu branch executives Rose Cartujano and Edith Rose Santos, HoSL director for sales and branch operations Aurora Gaston and Merla Pugeda, team leader Pearl Sanagustin and president for direct selling-Asia Perry Mogar.

Clips

Seasoned IT veteran

SAP sector director Antonio B. Javier—better known as "TJ"—has a clear perspective of himself and what he wants out of life. A seasoned veteran of the IT industry, this boyish-looking 38-year old has passed an impressive number of milestones in his career. At SAP, Javier is responsible for the total sector organization tasked with the overall company software licenses and service objectives. Javier graduated cum laude with a Bachelor of Science in Commerce and Business Management from De La Salle University. He also gained an associate degree in non-life insurance from the Insurance Institute for Asia and the Pacific.

Javier decided to funnel all his energy into building a successful sales and marketing career after graduation. Javier says that he now finds himself at the apex of what he terms the "intellectually exhilarating" software industry. "SAP is the leading edge of enterprise software. mySAP is quickly emerging as the preeminent Internet platform for e-Business, CRM, SCM globally, and I can't think of a better place to be in as enterprise and e-Business converge," says Javier.

TV ads made easy

JOIN Robert Labayen, one of the country's top TV ad men, in the upcoming On-Line Video Workshop (OLVW) 3-part lecture series "Making TV Ads." Seven-time Ad of the Year Award winner Labayen kicks off the lecture series with a one-day workshop on copywriting on March 17, at the Balay Kalinaw, University of the Philippines. For reservations and enrollment, call Mavic or Malou at 412-9312/412-7895 or email at online@netgazer.com.ph. Slots are limited.

Boss discriminates against rich employee

By Tita Datu Puangco

I AM a 25-year-old employee working with a company in Makati. I come from a well-to-do family. My boss is discriminating against me, making snide remarks about the elite, the rich and the famous. I gathered from my officemates that he is a left-leaning, former student activist.

This year, he gave me a minimal increase, saying that I don't need the money anyway. The fact is I work as hard as my other officemates, if not harder, because of his attitude towards me. I am quite proud that I am relatively independent financially from my parents. Sometimes, he gives me projects without full information, almost expecting me to fail. One time we went out as a team and he joked about my paying for the bill since it would just be "peanuts" for me. I feel totally embarrassed and demotivated, but also challenged to prove him wrong. Please tell me what I can do to improve the situation.

Poor little rich girl

The situation you are in is quite unfortunate but not hopeless. Based on your letter, I can sense that from your view, your boss is the problem. Your boss may need help in re-scripting his concept of the rich. As Enrique Zobel used to say, there are the idle rich and the working rich. I can clearly say that you belong to the working rich. So, what to do?

We all know that our environment, where we grew up and studied, can influence the way we view and perceive things. Definitely, it is wrong to discriminate. One must be appraised based on merit rather than on one's social standing. But changing your boss' mindset is an area of concern, over which you do not have control.

Advice FOR THE ANXIOUS PERSON AT WORK

Flex style

We propose that you start to work on areas where you have some control or influence. This means working on improving your professional relationship on a priority basis or developing your skills on a medium term basis.

A technique that works is called flex style. It means knowing your own and your boss' communication styles and flexing your style so you are better understood. Communicators can be classified according to the degree that they are assertive and responsive. You can either be an analytical, amiable, driver or expressive, according to the Boltons who wrote a book on this technique.

An analytical person is less assertive and less responsive. He tends to be emotionally restrained and rarely does he compliment others or get excited. He is organized, systematic and craves for data, the more the better. He is a slow decision maker who carefully weighs the facts. An amiable person on the other hand is generous and friendly with his time and is an excellent team player. He is diligent and quiet and does what people ask of him.

Other types

The driver is one who is less responsive and more assertive. He is decisive and task-oriented and tends to focus intently on job at hand. He gets right to the point, tends to be purposeful and energetic. He has little time or concern about people. The expressive person is one who is more assertive, friendly and empathic. He is flamboyant, impulsive and outgoing.

Based on your letter, you seem to be an amiable type. Your boss is either a driver or an analytical type because he is not able to sense how you are feeling. If your boss is a driver, the author suggests you pick up your pace and be more energetic. Say what you think, be more task-oriented and de-emphasize feelings. If on the other hand, if your boss happens to be an analytical type, then, aside from focusing on task instead of feelings, it is critical to plan your work and work your plan. It will pay to be well organized, detailed or factual.

Feedback

So, instead of taking in all of these snide remarks passively, why not try exercising assertiveness? Assertiveness means recognizing that you have rights as everyone else has rights. Proactively give him feedback on his behavior. Sometimes, bosses do not realize the impact of their behaviors on their subordinates. Looking at him straight in the eye, in a calm but clear voice, ask him permission if you can give him feedback. Describe to him a recent incident, situation or assignment. Point out to him his negative actions and the consequences or impact of those actions on you as a person. Be careful that you don't swing to the other side of the pendulum and become aggressive. Just like passive people, aggressive people rarely get results. Make sure that your conversation remains at an adult to adult level.

Second, level his expectations before accepting an assignment. You would need full information to do your work well. Before meeting him for a discussion, make a list of all the questions in your mind about the project. Sometimes, some project components may be unclear at the conceptualization stage. Make sure you are clear about the context and goals of the project, the roles you are expected to play and the desired outcomes. Upon completion of the project, make sure you go back to him with a written feedback.

ILLUSTRATION BY STEPH BRAVO

Visible results

Third, be visible and show visible results. Some people work hard but forget to broadcast their achievements. While modesty often times is a desirable virtue, in this case it may help to showcase what you are capable of doing and be visible at regular moments of the project.

Fourth, on the medium term, try to enhance your emotional intelligence. In her book "EQ Development," Dr. Patricia Patton simplifies qualities that make for success. You might want to work on qualities specifically, authenticity, adaptability and integrity.

Authenticity is knowing who you are, feeling comfortable with yourself and expressing what you mean with authority and integrity. This means accepting who you are, finding the right role models, understanding what you are feeling and knowing how to use your emotions.

Adaptability on the other hand, means having the flexibility to compromise and change. It encompasses the ability to build unity, agreement, compatibility and understanding.

Integrity

Finally, integrity is linked to the character of the individual. It allows feelings to be expressed with honesty and refinement. It means having a sense of right and wrong without being self-righteous. It means drawing from ethics and principles in deciding how you choose to live life and treat people. In challenging times, integrity makes you enjoy peace of mind.

If all these actions do not work on your boss, my colleagues suggest the job may not worth keeping. We are sure you would not be lacking in prospects for future work. And if you have an entrepreneurial bent, why not set up an alternative company whose culture of fairness and equity you can shape.

All the best.

(Ms Puangco is the CEO and President of Ancilla Enterprise Development Consulting. Send comments, feedback or advice on problems at work through email to ancillaedc@pacific.net.ph *or fax at 892-2902.)*

Achieve absolute bliss through 'I-Loc'

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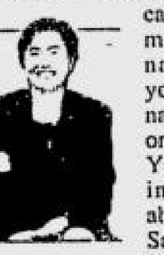

By Moje Ramos-Aquino

I WANT to nudge you a bit more about Locus of Control. This is one important idea that has helped me change my own worldview and my life. Your Personal Vision, Mission, Values, Big Life Goals, Objectives and Action Plans will remain on paper unless you have I-Loc (Internal Locus of Control) and have the confidence and commitment to make them happen.

What motivates you? What will start you off and make you run the distance to the finish line of whatever you have set your heart and mind to do? Why those VMVBLGObjAP? What are you after? What do you consider as successful? What is an achiever? What inspires you? What influences you the most?

In his book, "For Entrepreneurs Only," Wilson Harrell wrote that, predictably, the answer to these questions is almost always the same: "Money!" A few say "power." Or "influence." Some are more specific: big homes, yachts, private planes, Mercedes convertibles, travel, etc.

Material things

If your answers are exactly these or something similar to these, then, you are one of those living their lives on the basis of External Locus of Control (E-Loc). You have become so enamored with material things in life and with power to the point that material things and power now control your life. For example, you can't attend a party because you don't have a new dress. You hang around with the bosses in your office in order to get that promotion. You wear stylish clothes to be noticed. You feel nude without your cell phone. You use guns, goons, gold and *dagdag-bawas* in order to win that election. You wear your exquisite jewelry to the office. You eat out in those trendy restaurants to be seen. Getting your picture in the Lifestyle section is your idea of having arrived."

One classic example is that you have left your young children in the country and are now working in Hongkong because you earn a little more there. You namedrop and dot your sentences with names of famous and/or influential people. You casually, albeit intentionally, talk about watching Miss Saigon in London and New York without being asked. As president, you unabashedly use the full resources of your organization to hit at a member who dared to express alarm over your off-performance.

To this day, you still compare the cooking of your momma with your wife's. You wear a corset to have a semblance of a chiseled body. You buy friendship with gifts and treats. You barely have a space to work on your desk, which is cluttered with picture frames of your loved ones and a thousand and one knick-knacks that you gathered in your malling and travelling. You buy all those insurance policies and pre-need plans, just in case. You use a faux Gucci bag or an imitation Rolex watch.

Preferences

You walk with a swagger brandishing a key to the executive elevator and washroom. You ride a car, taxi or tricycle to traverse five blocks or less. Your taste buds now prefer Caesar's salad to *halabos na talbos ng kamote* with *bagoong* and *kamatis*. You bare your ass and your bust to click with the fans. You can't start the day without reading the news and downing a cup of black coffee.

Come on. It is so easy to become E-Loc. It is a mask for your lack of self-confidence, commitment and faith. It camouflages your insecurities and lack of talent. It also becomes very convenient to blame failure on somebody or something out of your control. You believe that nothing can be done *sapagkat kami ay tao lamang o kami ay mahirap lamang*. It pulls you down and leads you to develop lower expectations, choose easier challenges and abandon your dreams quickly at the first taste of hardship or drawback. In the same breath, it diminishes your self-esteem and self-worth when you attribute your success to other people, circumstances or luck.

On the other hand, being I-Loc means you believe that you have control over your personal successes and failures You are responsible for the outcome of the situation you are in. You believe that, God willing, you will succeed in whatever you do because you have the requisite ability to succeed and because you give it a try.

Self-image

With conscious effort, you can surely change your locus of control from E-Loc to I-Loc. First, nurture your self-image. Stop when you hear yourself discounting your own talents, competencies and efforts. Claim your success! Don't gauge your success by somebody else's measure. Next, bask in its glory while it lasts. Celebrate! There is no "small" or "big" success, only success. You may also "advertise" your achievements if others don't notice. Why not? You need that promotion or pay increase, don't you? More importantly, examine your successes. Explore it for good qualities you might have that are not obvious to you and, therefore, you don't use them often. Mine it for lessons that you could apply in other circumstances.

Finally, be proactive. Now, be sure to finalize your life plan. But remember it is not written in stone or water. Therefore, your life plan should be flexible and open for changes at the same time that it should not be vulnerable and revised or abandoned at whim.

Money, fame, power and influence are by-products of a life well lived. Success in life is measured by the amount of freedom you have over your life. As Mr. Harrell wrote about being entrepreneurial, "Freedom to get your head above the crowd. Freedom to be your own person. Freedom to have an idea and to turn that idea into a business, and that business into an empire, if you can. Freedom to seek excellence. Freedom to care about your product or service, your people, your customer. And, if it all works—freedom to tell bankers, "Get thee to Hell."

Happiness

Think about this: the more you have money and material things, the more you want them. The higher you get to positions of power, the higher you want to go up and the more difficult it is to let go. The more influence you have, the more corrupt you become. From those who have reached the pinnacle, they unanimously say that it is lonely at the top.

Freedom is happiness and happiness is freedom. Ultimately, what we seek in this life is happiness. Happiness comes from within you. Nobody or nothing could make you happy. It is your decision to be happy about anything or anybody. When you are happy, it is absolute bliss, you do not want more. And when you are happy, the world smiles with you.

Do you experience spontaneous happiness when, as they say, an angel passes by and you find yourself smiling happily with no apparent reason? Hmmmm, *sarap ng* feeling.

More ASTD 2001 updates

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(Email feedback to moje.ramos@aquino.ZZN.com.*)*

People at Work visits San Beda

THE PEOPLE at Work symposium at San Beda College has been moved to March 21, Wednesday, at 2 in the afternoon at the Covered Court No. 3.

The symposium includes Recipes for Learning columnist and Paradigms and Paradoxes president, Moje Ramos Aquino; Ancilla Enterprise Development Consulting, Inc. president Tita Datu Puangco, who writes Advice for the Anxious Person at Work; 1999 President of the Personnel Management Association of the Philippines and regular Skills Toolbox writer Ernie Cecilia; president of Career Systems, Josie Santamaria and People at Work editor and HR consultant, Regina Galang Reyes. The panel will conduct group activities and give lecturettes on personal visioning, self-assessment, career options, selecting a great company to work for and entrepreneurship.

For more information, email *peopleatwork@inquirer.com.ph*, call Rochelle Leonor at 8978808 loc. 554 or Ricky Garcia, SBC-CAS Guidance Counselor, at 735-6011.

Tests . . .

(From page B14)

just want to find out how you value yourself.

As a fresh graduate, learn about the company you want to join. Ask about its standing in the industry, benchmark with a few friends and relatives on salaries within the industry, and know the approximate worth of the job you are applying for. Do not quote in your application sheet "minimum wage" or lower amounts. Do not quote horrendous amounts higher than the salary of your would-be boss.

4. Know how to seal the employment contract.

A good play is not enough—you have to score. After passing the tests and interviews, you have to translate the good impression into a job offer. Do not bungle the final interview with the hiring authority. Be polite and continue to create the impression that you are who they are looking for.

Be ready with all documentary requirements—clearances, transcripts, SSS number, TIN and other certificates. In fact, have several sets ready every time you go to a company to apply.

Finally, be prepared for the physical exam (PE). Nobody gets hired, even if he is a summa cum laude, if he doesn't pass the PE. Have plenty of rest, exercise and good diet, and avoid any form of vice. A few good candidates who failed this stage never got the great career they dreamed of.

Getting hired is a serious business. In fact, it is very competitive. It is also tiring and taxing both for the job applicants as well as for the personnel people tasked to make the match between job vacancies and the job applicants.

Here's a final tip for fresh graduates. If you really want to get hired, help the personnel manager answer these two questions in his mind as he reviews your resume or interviews you:

Can you do the job? Will you do the job?

Finally, I congratulate all graduating students this year. I hope that this advice will give them the edge in getting hired. They can also refer to my books for details, worksheets and sample resumes.

As an entrepreneur, how do you fight the big guys?

DEAR WW: I own a hardware store in a small town. Recently, one of the chains opened a store in a mall just up the road. With their name and size, I'm scared they'll clean my clock.

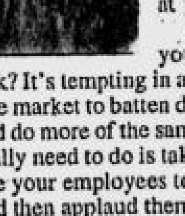
Nothing but a slingshot

Before you jump to conclusions, listen to this story. Mr. Badawi, an Egyptian suffering from liver disease, recently died and was placed in his local hospital morgue. The only thing was, he wasn't really dead. When he came to several hours later, he did what any one would do if he suddenly found himself in a refrigerator full of corpses: he yelled. The morgue attendant heard his cries, ran into the refrigerator, took one look at the corpse-who-could-talk, and immediately died of shock. Which just goes to show that sometimes death and survival come where you least expect them.

So don't assume that yours is the business that will bite the dust. Your small size gives you an ability to flex and change that your larger competitor often lacks. Take advantage of that to carve out a unique niche. Julie Bick, author of "All I Really Need to Know in Business I Learned at Microsoft" (Pocket Books, 1997), shares some of the secrets that catapulted Microsoft from two guys with big dreams into a software behemoth. From managing your email to your employees, it'll give you a peek into their windows. Ask yourself the following questions:

WORKING WOUNDED

By Bob Rosner



1. Can you differentiate yourself from the competition? When Microsoft brought out Encarta there were other encyclopedias on the market that were bigger and more thorough. So the company differentiated their entry by introducing multimedia and making it more fun to use. Today it's the number one selling encyclopedia. What can you do to differentiate your store from your competitor? What new products or services can you provide that will keep customers coming in?

2. Can you learn to think three moves ahead? Don't just focus on what you'll do to set your business apart, but think about how your competitor will counter your move. Then develop a contingency plan to deal with whatever they'll throw back at you.

3. Can you up your tolerance for risk? It's tempting in a newly competitive market to batten down the hatches and do more of the same. But what you really need to do is take risks. Encourage your employees to try new things, and then applaud them when they fail: they'll know what not to do next time! At Microsoft they say, "if you fire the person who failed, you throw away their experience."

Recently Microsoft made major headlines when it invested $150 million in ailing Apple Computer. Why did Microsoft play Johnny Appleseed? A small part of the reason could be that once upon a time their positions were reversed and Apple came to Microsoft's rescue with a $28,000 contract. So who knows? If you're creative and you follow Julie's tips, maybe one day a certain hardware chain with a store just up the road might be calling you asking about a loan!

Here are the results of the recent workingwounded.com poll: If you were going up against a Goliath of a competitor, what song would you be singing?

—Let It Be, 10 percent
—Taps, 35 percent
—We Shall Overcome, 55 percent

Our winning entrepreneurial tip comes from Jim in Fall City. "The key thing to remember about the big guys is there is no such thing as big guys. There are only piles of medium to smaller guys. The real competition is in the quality of your ideas and your ability to deliver."

(Email feedback to bob@workingwounded.com*)*

e-mail: peopleatwork@inquirer.com.ph.

PEOPLE *at* WORK

RAUL O. MARCELO, Editor ■ REGINA GALANG REYES, Subsection Editor

Tests awaits new grads entering work world

BY ERNIE O. CECILIA

LAST week, I presented six ways on how new graduates with no experience can get themselves hired. The following are four more techniques for graduates who are poised to enter the work world this year.

1. Know how to pass the tests.

Since the college diploma is not a guarantee that an applicant can do the job, most companies still give IQ, aptitude or achievement tests. Be prepared when taking tests. Have a good rest and review prior to the tests. Concentrate on your exam and never cheat.

Be time conscious and stay alert. Be neat with your test paper and write legibly. Pass the tests, as some companies rely on tests to determine applicants' capabilities, especially for new graduates or those without track records.

2. Know how to pass the interviews.

After the preliminary interview and the tests, the usual next stage is the in-depth interview (DI). Here, the personnel manager, the manager in need of the person, and others involved in the decision to hire will interview you, either individually or as a panel.

This is the moment of truth where they "separate the men from the boys." Make a truly good impression at this stage, for it is now or never. If you pass this stage, you will get into the short list or even get hired right away. Just remain calm, cool and composed, but be alert, honest and competent. By all means, do not lie. It will only make you nervous or disqualify you later.

As a fresh graduate, do not invent competencies that you don't have or projects you did not do. Highlight that you are a fast learner and that you have the motivation to make a good career in the company. Then, rationalize.

3. Know how to negotiate for the right pay.

When you are asked how much you want to get paid, be sure to have the right answer. Do not sell yourself short or ask for the sky—both are disastrous. Go to the interview with a ready answer even before you are asked the question. Usually, large companies have fixed salary structures and know how much to pay you. Sometimes, interviewers

TESTS/B13

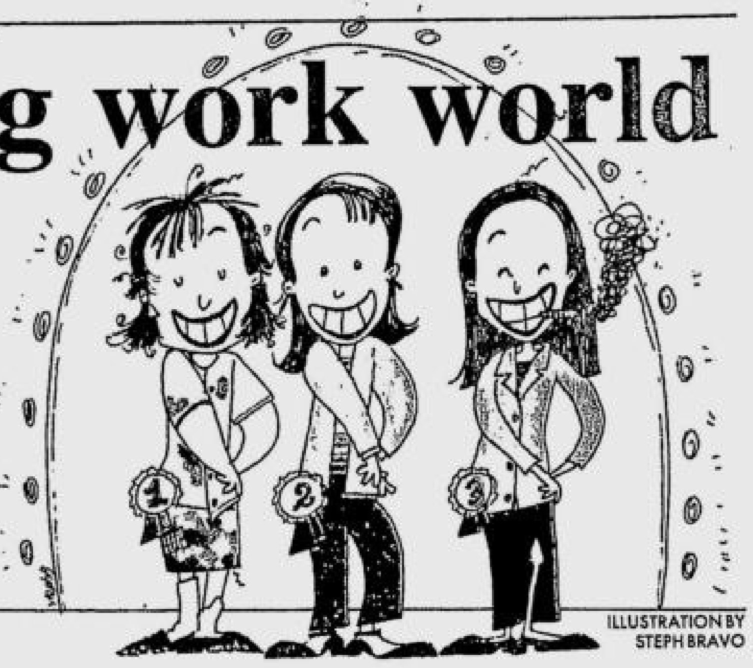


ILLUSTRATION BY STEPH BRAVO

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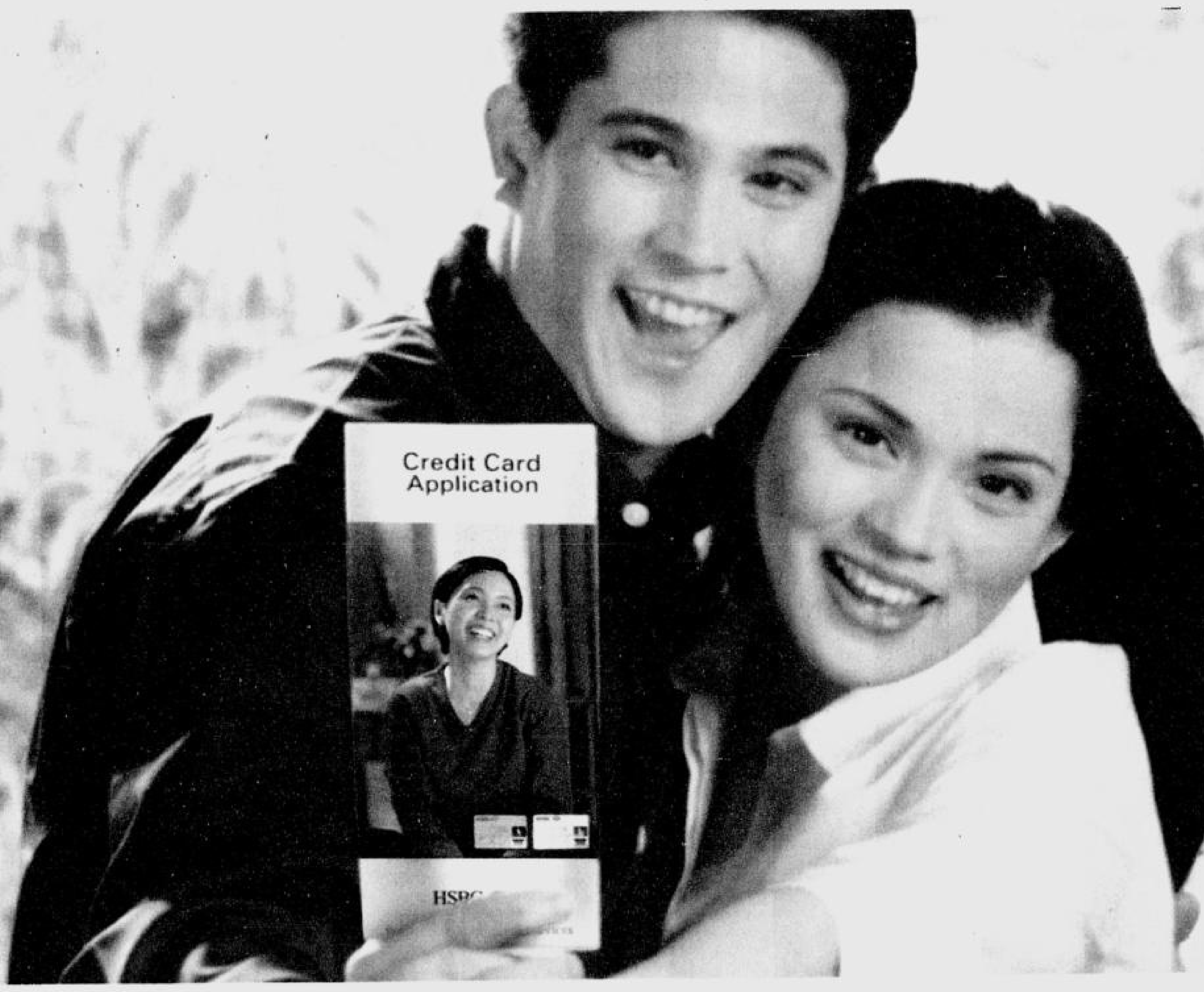

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HSBC recently re-launched the daily "100K" raffle, following the success of a similar marketing initiative in 1999, a promotion unique to HSBC credit cards and instrumental in the exceptional growth of the Bank's credit card base in the Philippines.

The rules are easy and simple – and the prizes, quite hard to resist. Every applicant for HSBC's Visa credit card gets unlimited chances to win PHP100,000 everyday. No card approval is necessary. As long as the application qualifies, it is immediately eligible for the daily raffle. Non-winning entries qualify for all succeeding draws.

Existing cardholders also get the same chances to win PHP100,000 everyday. By simply referring qualified applicants to get HSBC's Visa card, they become eligible to join the daily raffle. The more friends referred, the more chances of winning.

"HSBC's '100K' raffle was designed to provide instant rewards and to make winning easy. How many of us get all cynical about the usual raffle promos where prizes are few and the chances of winning too remote? With HSBC's "100K" raffle, it is easy to join – just apply and refer – and so easy to win – raffles are held everyday, not weeks and months after you've put in your stub", said Peter Yeates, HSBC's senior vice president for personal financial services.

Win with an HSBC Visa card. Successful applicants receive HSBC's Visa card, which is one of the world's most recognised credit cards. It is accepted in over 17 million establishments worldwide and has one of the most comprehensive and flexible bonus points programs in the country – Rewards. With Rewards, HSBC's cardholders earn 1 bonus point for every PHP10 spent – the lowest spending-to-points conversion rate in the industry. Points can be accumulated to convert not only into the usual gift items but also into Value and Cash Vouchers that can be used in a variety of dining, shopping and hotel/resort outlets. Points can also be converted into a donation to *"Better Schools for Brighter Futures"*, a program that HSBC is undertaking with *Books for the Barrios*, to transform a public school in Quezon City into a world-class learning center. Points also translate to free airmiles from two of the world's most comprehensive frequent flyer programs – Cathay Pacific's Asia Miles and United Airlines' Mileage program.

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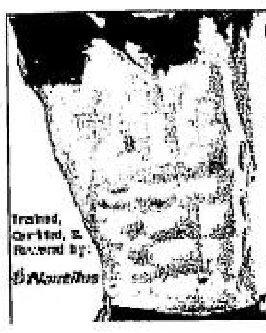
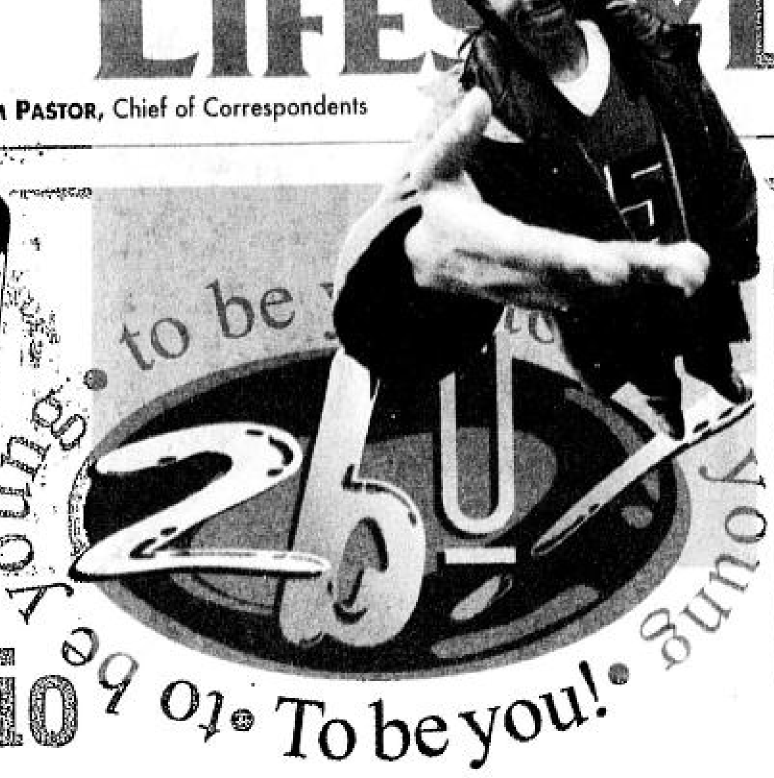


For feedback or suggestions ls_2bu@inquirer.com.ph

LIFES YLE

CHELO BANAL-FORMOSO, Editor PAM PASTOR, Chief of Correspondents



to be young · to be young · To be you!

2bU! goes to Baguio

RECENTLY, 2bU! accepted an invitation to visit Baguio City in time for the Panagbenga flower festival, of which Globe Telecom was a sponsor. The three days we spent there were a flurry of fun, energy and excitement. We got to know the people, the places and the magic that has kept visitors coming back again and again to the City of Pines.

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STEP ASIDE. (Clockwise from foreground) Jhay-ar Borce (senior, University of Baguio High School), Don Niaceña (sophomore, UBHS), Ray Patrick Kutterer (sophomore, St. Anthony School), Dave Mateo (sophomore, UBHS), Francis Neri (junior, Pines Montessori) and Jonathan Toledo (freshman, St. Louis University Boys' High)

'Visitors can have a field day at the strawberry farm in La Trinidad. Or the night spots, like Shadows disco at Concorde Hotel. As for us, you can find us at the new malls here, like Cooyesan, which has four movie houses'

ON THE ROCKS. Carlos Max T. de Guzman (senior, computer engineering, University of Baguio; claims to be a good cook at home), Don Tamayo (junior, computer science, UB; draws the zaniest cartoons) and Edmundo Bautista (sophomore, computer science, UB; strums the guitar like he's twiddling your heartstrings).

'Baguio is good people, warm hearts, a cool place like nothing else. You must try City Lights (Ed's favorite bar), Gimbals (Don's choice) and Ionic Café (Carlos' jazzy hangout). Our city is a place to find someone to fall in love with'

Boys, boys, boys in bad, baaad Baguio

'You guys from Manila should come here to walk up and down Session Road. It's where you meet different people in one setting. Session Road is Baguio in a nutshell: a fun mix. That's why we're making 'tambay' here, like now'

STREETSMART. Dominick Acosta, Jed Sta. Maria, Dann Harvey Macadaeg, Josnick Marcelino, Adrianne David Matulac and Jan Josep Marcelino

PHOTOS BY MIKE ALQUINTO

PEOPLE go to Baguio for all sorts of reasons. The nippy weather. The jams. What remains of the view. Handpainted T-shirts. Or even romance.

On this page we share what the boys of Baguio—those we bumped into during the GenTxt gig on Session Road sponsored by industry leader Globe Telecom—offer as their city's main selling points. We asked them why lowlanders should brave the landslide-prone zigzag route to their mountain hideaway.

Of course, everyone has his or her own reasons for loving Baguio.

Our Baguio memories hark all the way back to the Café Amapola, that zany hangout where Session Road spills out into the noisy, smoky sidestreet which Manila buses have claimed as their 24-hour terminal.

In Amapola's mezzanine, we laid on cushy rugs and hugged throw pillows or each other. There we drank beer and gin tonic and talked about life in general, although later the talk would become pointedly specific, if talk was still needed by then. All this, amid the racket of the in-house folk singer who got us dizzy with his covers of Don MacLean.

Those were the days when we would rush up to the mountain resort for strolls down Flirtation Walk and Kissing Rock.

But the big quake toppled the building where the Amapola, and its accompanying quirky art gallery, thrived. And that was the end of an era.

To be sure, we were there when the City of Pines was still suffering the aftershocks. We lived in tents and helped plant pine saplings at the places of destruction. We scampered for safety during slight quakes at daytime and partied at Halfway House at night with some Peemayers, who faced their own calamity at Fort Del Pilar with stoic heroism. We wrote how the swimming pool floor at the Academy suffered a zigzag crack—"like an unzipped zipper grinning maliciously."

Baguio makes you think like that. Makes you see that way. Makes you feel that kind of shameless spontaneity. Without any inhibitions.

Up there where the clouds kiss you with icy clarity, anything goes. And these GenTxt boys know it.

Mozart A.T. Pastrano

'You should come here for the girls. Or the boys. We're what makes Baguio a happening place. We're the Baguio experience'

COOL DUDES. Macky Tudlong and Marco Julius Conde (basketball players, St. Louis University Boys' High)

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City of nightlife

The bar scene is just fine in the City of Pines

THERE'S no stopping the crowd at Shadow.

Don't be too quick to write the Baguio nightlife off. 2bU!'s recent trip to the City of Pines confirmed one thing—Filipinos, wherever they are, know how to party.

Café San Luis

(Off Session Road, Baguio City)

Friday night. Our first stop was Café San Luis, so named because it started out as a coffee shop at St. Louis University in Baguio. This bar (the expansion took place in '98) is for people who like good music. The wooden tables and chairs and the ethnic lamps made by manager Malou Flores give the place a homey, cozy feel. You don't even have to dress up if you don't feel like it. It's like sitting in your own living room—with a band playing right in front of you.

When we got there, Northwind was in the middle of a set, playing "Video Killed the Radio Star" and a hilarious rendition of "'Til There Was You." The receptive crowd—a good mix of young and old, male and female—howled and hooted at Bong's antics while drinking. Compared to your usual Malate bar, everything on the menu is reasonably priced, from the cocktails and bombers to the shooters and non-alcoholic drinks. And the list of drinks is endless. Bourbon, gin, vodka, rum, tequila, cognac, brandy, whisky—you name it, they have it.

You can even get your favorite drinks by the pitcher. And you can choose from long list of food you can share with your friends—chicken, *gambas*, squid, *sisig*, *calamares*, etc.

The place was packed, with more and more people coming in as the night lasted. The tables were full and a lot of people were content to stand around, enjoying the show.

There is a different kind of show to look forward to every night, since the four bands that consider Café San Luis their home play different kinds of music. Brown Flavah plays R&B on Tuesdays and Saturdays. Northwind plays alternative music on Mondays and Fridays. Wednesdays and Fridays are nights for slow love songs played by Soundcheck. Lovers of pop have Thursdays and Sundays to listen to Raijin Urthe.

Café San Luis is not just a bar. It is a venue for artists, a gallery of sorts. On the walls are nude paintings by Baguio artists who held a painting session last Nov. 30 at the bar.

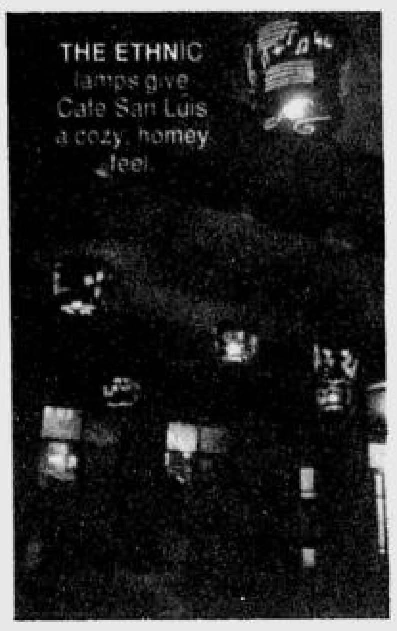
If you love art, great music and a good time, Café San Luis will not disappoint.

Shadow

(5/F, Concorde Hotel)

The plastic flowers that adorned the entrance to this club filled me with apprehension. It didn't look like the place had too much to offer. But stepping through the door changed my mind.

The energy that filled the place was so high you could almost touch it. High school and college kids (a much younger crowd compared to Café San Luis) filled the two-level space of Shadow. There's an area for people who just want to sit around and drink. And there's a huge dance floor for souls with an insatiable desire to keep moving all night.



THE ETHNIC lamps give Cafe San Luis a cozy, homey feel.

Friday evening is Shadow's Fusion night. The party began with several DJs playing R&B hits. House took over in the wee hours of the morning.

Hanging out at Shadow is an experience. It cannot be denied—the party spirit is a-l-i-v-e in Baguio.

Brew Yard

It was because of a 3 a.m. hunt for a caffeine fix (my companions were all coffee junkies) that we found this place. If you don't exactly appreciate the loud thump-thump of a bass and you want to be able to converse with your companions without screaming your lungs off, Brew Yard is the place for you.

From Wednesday to Monday, for the consumable entrance fee of P100, you get to spend the night listening to the mellow sounds of acoustic music and the gentle crooning of the bar's female singer.

The crowd is older, the place is comfy and you don't have to use sign language. And Mozart swears by their gin tonic. "It's really light," he said.

Their *chicharon* was pretty good, too.

18 B.C.

(Legarda Road)

Here's another place for band lovers. It was past 3 a.m. on a Saturday night when we stepped through the entrance of 18 B.C. To our surprise, the place was packed. The crowd was young—mostly college kids and yuppies who were very appreciative of the music. They were even joking around with the band's lead singer.

I love the interiors of the place. It is well lit, unlike your usual music joint, and the wooden panels are easy on the eyes. Despite the big crowd, the place was comfortable. The energy was high. Even after the band finished playing, the people hung around, just talking and having fun—the perfect way to spend the last hours of a Saturday night gimmick.

Pam Pastor

E-mail the author at p-a-m-m-y@gurlmail.com.

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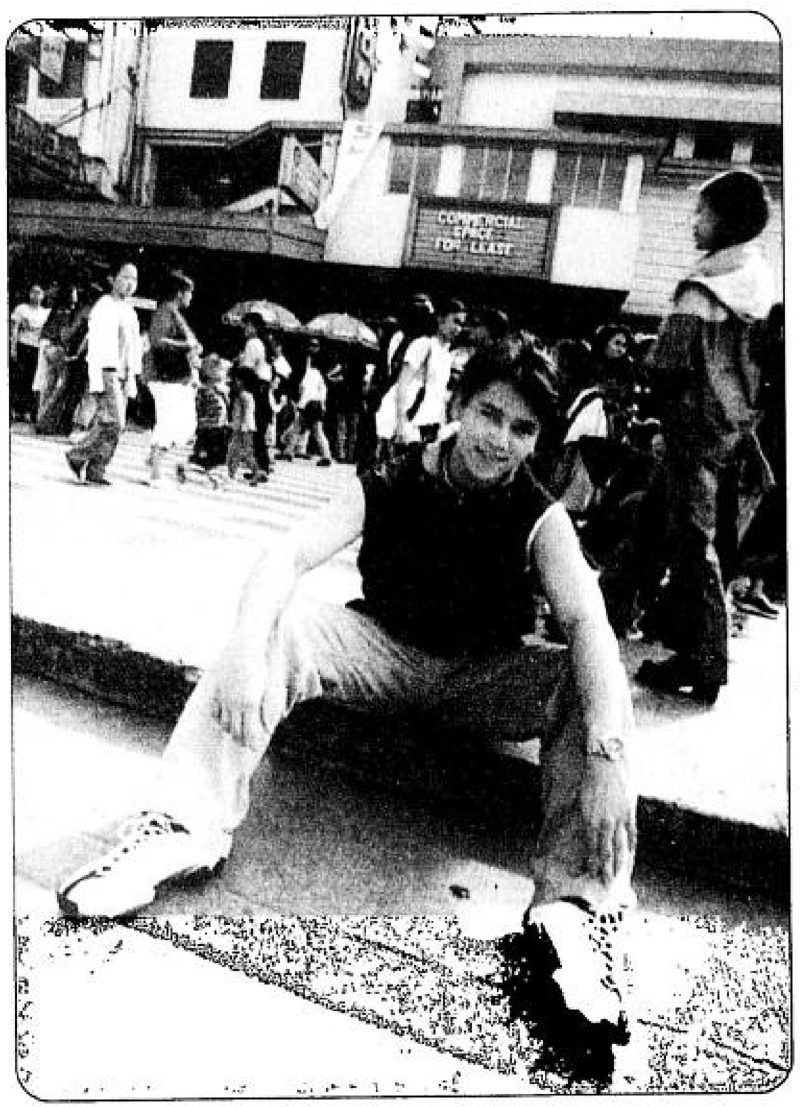
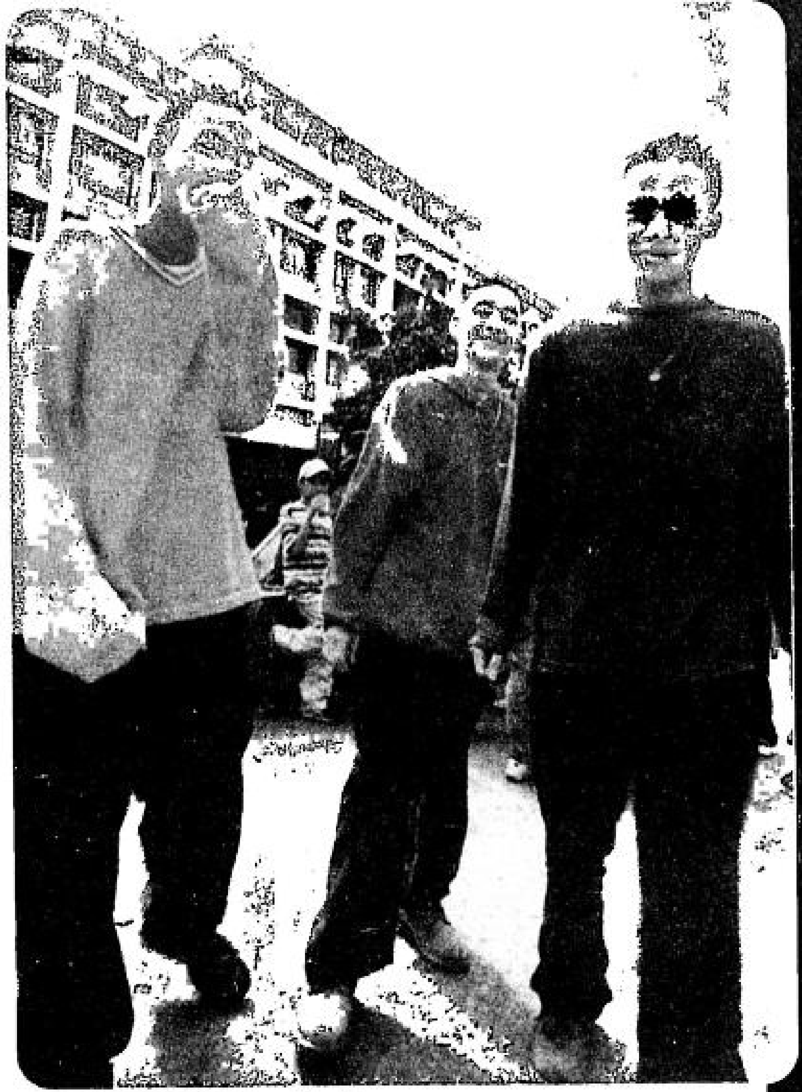
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0444 Series of 2001.


SIDEWALK CUTIE. Hu says u nid sleeves in d ct of pyns?


NOT A BOYBAND. Sweating it up

In Baguio, street fashion has not been left out in the cold; it has become the subtext of the text generation

GenTxt fashion on Session Road

By Pam Pastor
Photos by Mike Alquinto

GLOBE's GenTxt Party that featured the comeback of legendary band The Dawn was still hours away. But to our pleasant surprise, Session Road was packed early with young people—walking around, hanging out on the sidewalks, inspecting trinkets in different booths. A sense of anticipation lent warmth to the chilly atmosphere.

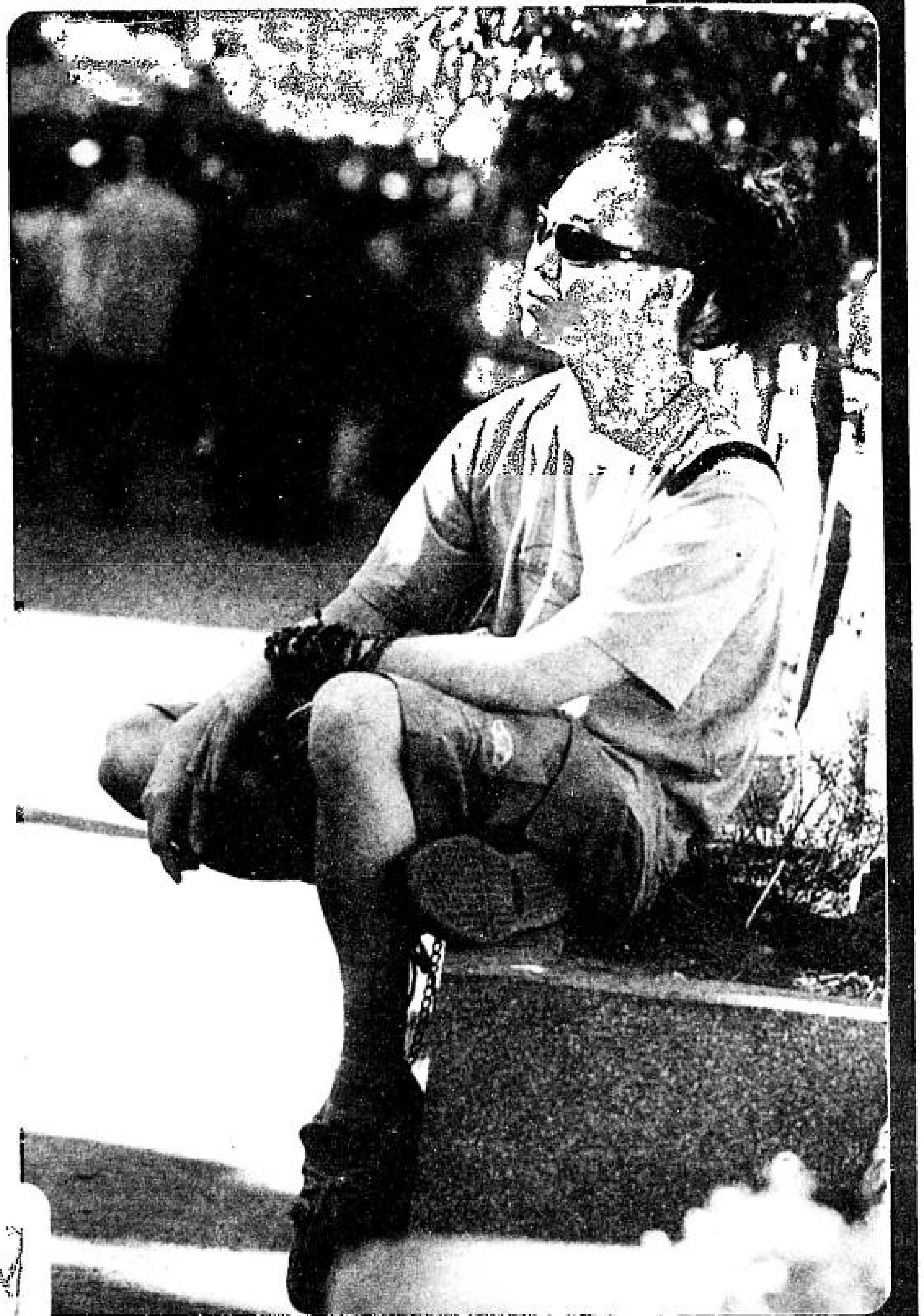
Baguio is home to eclectic individuals who value style as much as comfort. That day, the streets were a showcase of fashion beyond rules and boundaries. There were no standards. None of the usual capri and spaghetti-strapped tops you see in Metro Manila malls.

Even the men did not shy away from using clothes and accessories to express themselves. No uniformity, just sheer creativity. Walking around meant breathing in not just the fresh air of the highlands but the energy of youth.

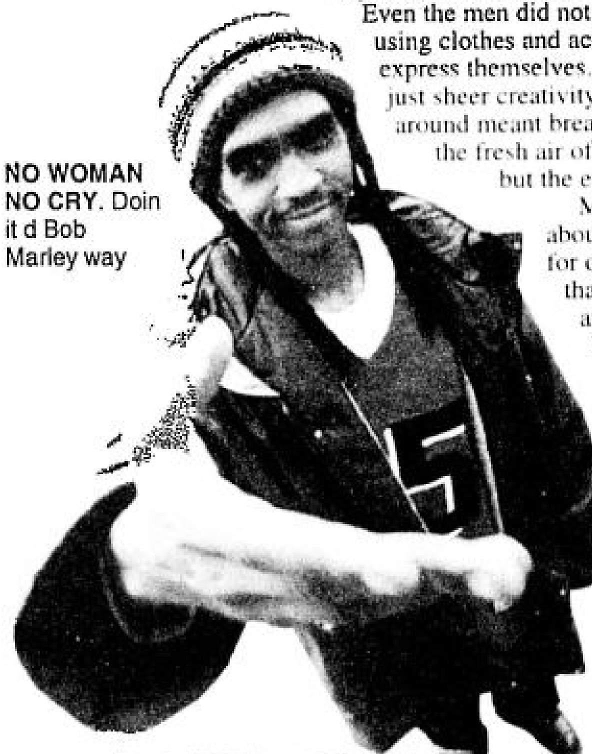
Mike and I moved about, on the lookout for outfits and people that would catch our attention. We were looking for attitude, style, confidence—and undeniable individuality.

Our top picks gamely posed, confirming one thing—Baguio is no place for shyness and conformity.

BASHFUL BEAUTY. Dont drop dat cell phone.


CONFORM 2 NOTHNG. Celebr8ng individual fridom

BEAD-DAZZLED. 2 locals show us wat it means 2 accessorize.


NO WOMAN NO CRY. Doin it d Bob Marley way

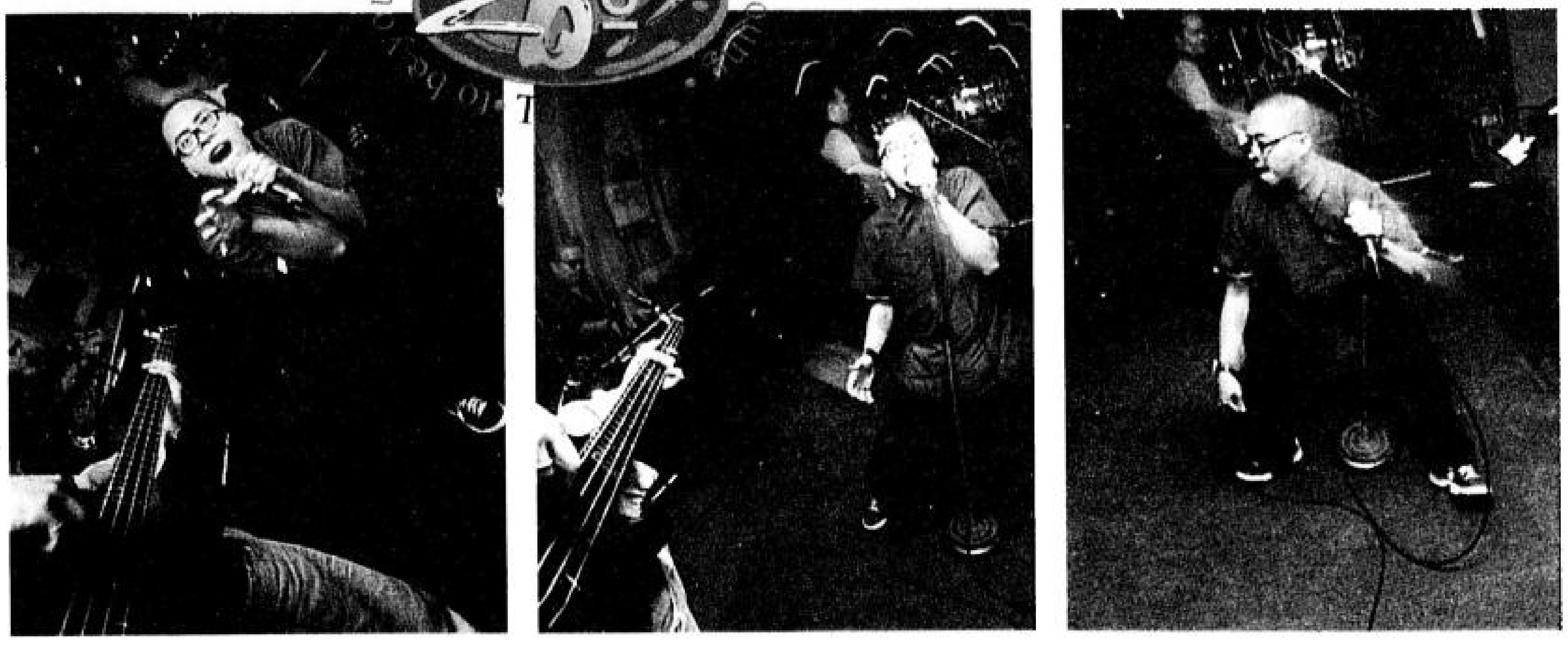
2 KEWL. D Baguio chill is no big deal 4 dis Gentxtr.

NO RULS. Mixng n matchng her own reliables gave dis grl a uniq outfit.

OOH-LA-LEATHER. Ol-blak in Baguio daylyt

OL SUITD UP. Dis artist takes Brooks Brothers fashion 2 d strits.

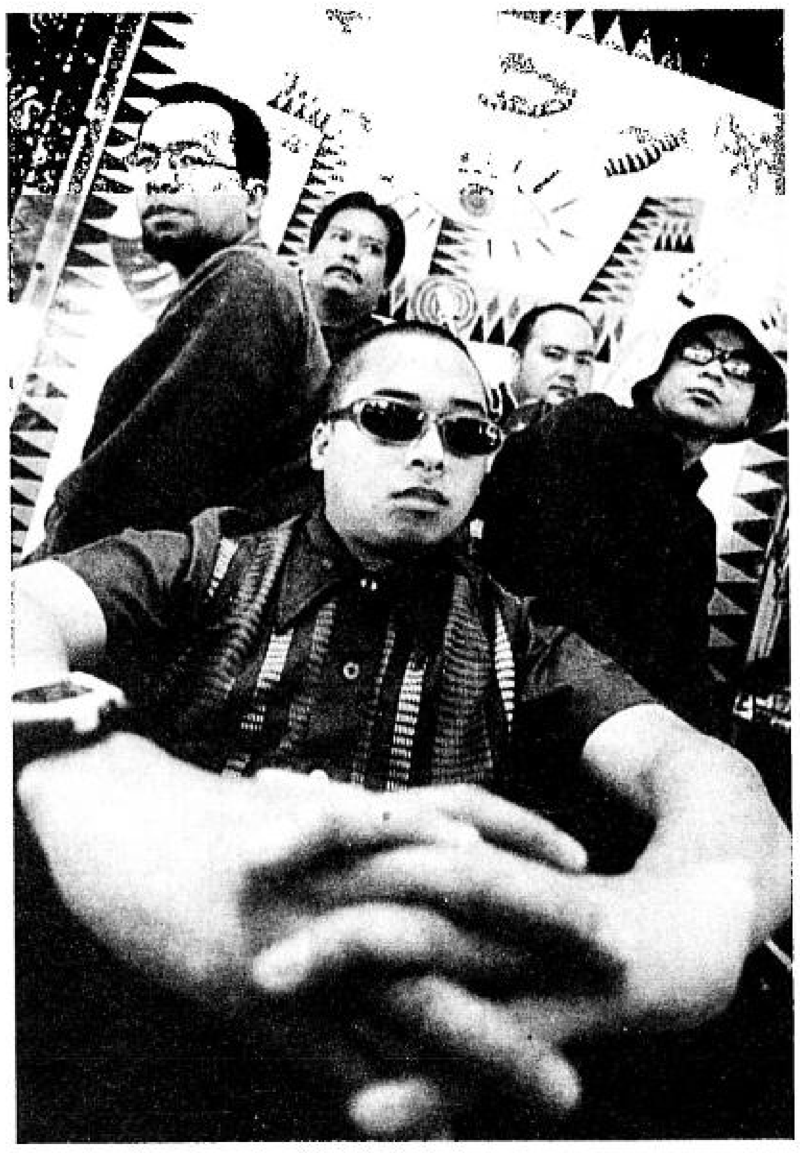
D LONG N SHORT OF IT. Standard hairstyles r a big no.



ROMANCING THE MIKE. Baguio is never the same again... with Northwind raising heat levels to the max.

The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the Northwind

Average salaried persons by day, musical dynamos by night



THE NEXT BIG THING. Northwind is composed of (clockwise from foreground) vocalist Bong Manansala, drummer Roland Rabang, keyboardist Abner Villanueva, guitarist Badj Palugod and bassist Roy Espanillo (with shades and golf cap).

BY MOZART A.T. PASTRANO
PHOTOS BY MIKE ALQUINTO

FORGET Burnham Park. It's as kitschy as the B movies shot there. Do you really want to make a pilgrimage to Mines' View, where the view now is but a depressing shimmer of shingle roofs? And who cares about Mansion House even if you're on a pictorial binge?

I can think of only one reason hip—that is, in-the-know and in-the-groove—people like you and I should go to Baguio these days. And it's Northwind. Yup, Northwind—the band that plays on Mondays and Fridays at Café San Luis, at the sidestreet of Jollibee off Session Road. (*See related story on Baguio's nightlife*)

Let me tell you: Northwind is the coolest thing ever, with its kind of jamming that mixes gotcha repertoire, gutsy sounds and grungy stage performance. Simply grabbing!

They'd begin a set with, say, pop or New Wave, like "In Between Days" by The Cure. Now, if that doesn't quite set the mood!

They'd follow this with something light, something pop. And then—*kaboom!*—an alternative number like "Video Killed the Radio Star" by Presidents of the United States of America (Pusa). They would segue to reggae, such as Bob Marley's "Waiting in Vain." Then fast reggae or ska, like "Wrong Way" by Sublime.

Now that they have the crowd in their very hands, they'd try a different tack. They would do a Latin number, usually a Santana: "Corazon Espenado," "Oye Como Va," "Smooth, Black Magic," mostly from the "Supernatural" album.

This Latin spell is such a refreshing break with its languorous but insistent rhythm. And it showcases the band's vocal virtuosity, too.

Such a spell is but prelude to a stroll down memory lane, with Beatles numbers like "Till There Was You," "All My Loving," "Ticket to Ride," "This Boy," "Secret" and "I Saw Her Standing There."

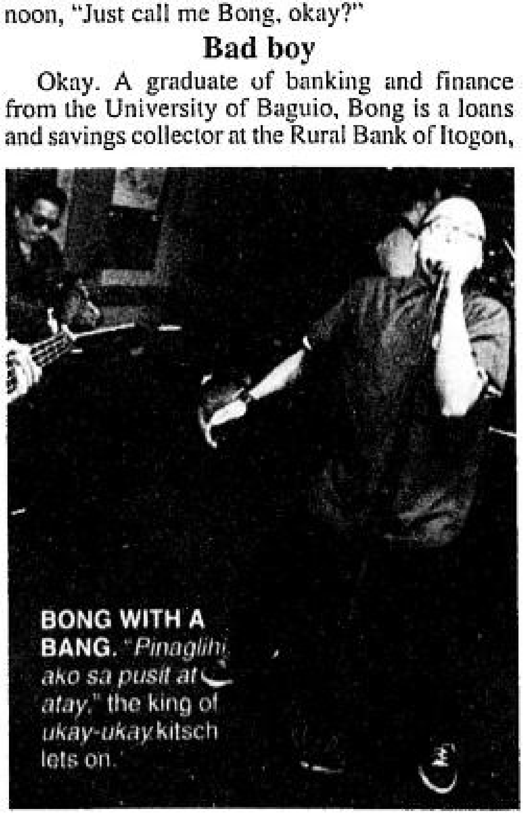
To wrap it all up, Northwind offers its original piece, "Mana." It's a bluesy number, with a scintillating sax arrangement that raises the heat levels to bursting.

It was written and set to music by lead vocalist Joseph Edralin Quiambao Manansala, a 25-year-old wonderkid who insists, when we sit down with the group for an interview one afternoon, "Just call me Bong, okay?"

Bad boy

Okay. A graduate of banking and finance from the University of Baguio, Bong is a loans and savings collector at the Rural Bank of Itogon, Baguio City branch. I saw him walking up the road across Burnham one day, and he did look like a respectable bank employee, in a crisp button-up polo and smart slacks.

BAGUIO'S BEST JAM. Bye, bye, strawberry jam. We're talking band jamming here.



BONG WITH A BANG. "*Pinaglihi ako sa pusit at atay,*" the king of *ukay-ukay* kitsch lets on.

But at night, as the frontman for the band, baby, he's something else! He dresses up theatrically awful, in what looks like *ukay-ukay* kitsch—but that's part of his bad, baaad boy appeal.

He doesn't just sing, you see. He *performs*. Performance artist Vim Nadera should watch out—or watch him. Bong romances the microphone, the soundbox, the mike stand and the audience with lusty relish as the night progresses, and not necessarily in that order.

The strangest thing is that Bong has a powerful voice, too. Not overpowering, thank goodness, but a lusty sound that strikes and soothes both at the same time. The boy-next-door's voice that grows on you. And hooks you. Like crazy.

"*Pinaglihi kasi ako ng nanay ko sa pusit at atay,*" guffaws he who idolizes John Lennon and Elvis Presley.

As it turns out, Bong is a new addition to Northwind. He was invited to the band last year by bassist Roy Espanillo, 21, who's also a newcomer.

Now, Roy is one super-duper smoothie. Pardon the dated language, but it's true. He's still in school, a third-year architecture major at the University of Baguio, but, hey, he's above it all. Onstage, he stands in a corner and just strums his strings with nary a change of facial expression and pose—whatever the music, whatever else Bong is doing upfront. Super-duper cool, I tell you. (No wonder Roy has the *colegiala* types screaming in their undies.)

Originals

Northwind's originals are guitarist Erwin M. Palugod, 29, a friendly sort who's called Badj by the group; drummer Roland P. Rabang, 31, the group's informal spokesperson; and keyboardist Abner R. Villanueva, 35, who also plays the sax—and how!

Badj, who's so easy to warm up to, is now happy to announce that, finally, his love life is something to crow about. That's what he's busy with nowadays.

Roland is last year's second-prize winner in the national Centennial essay-writing contest sponsored by the Civil Service Commission. He's the information officer of the Baguio water district.

As for Abner, he's the regional information officer of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in the Cordilleras. This proud father of four accepts music tutorials on the side.

And that's the key phrase for these guys: on the side. Their gig as Northwind is just on the side. They all have other things to do. Day jobs. School. Love life.

But you wouldn't know it by the way they jam at night. It's like music is their passion. Their life. Their reason for being.

It probably is. Check them out. Baguio will never be the same... without them.

E-mail the author at mozpas@yahoo.com

THE COOLEST THING EVER. Gotcha repertoire, gutsy sounds and grungy stage acrobatics

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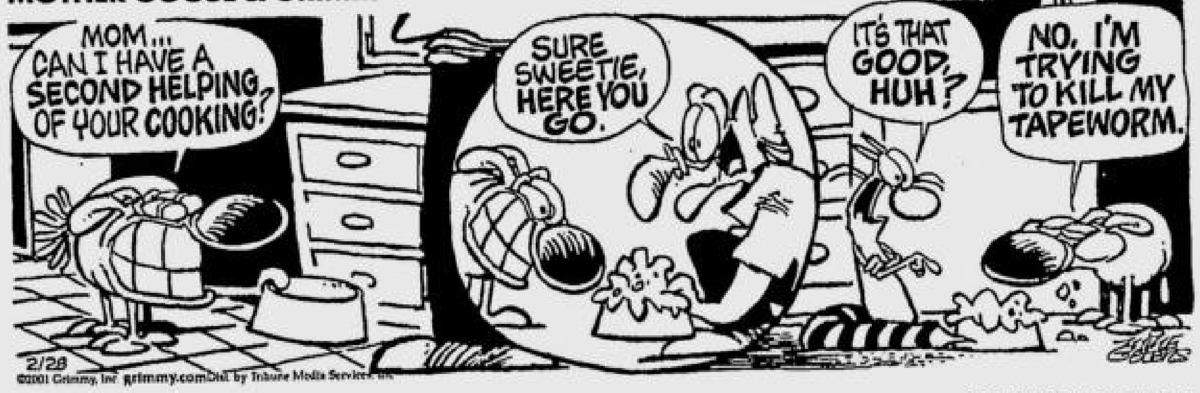
COMIC Relief

MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS


MOM... CAN I HAVE A SECOND HELPING OF YOUR COOKING?
SURE SWEETIE, HERE YOU GO.
IT'S THAT GOOD, HUH?
NO. I'M TRYING TO KILL MY TAPEWORM.
2/28
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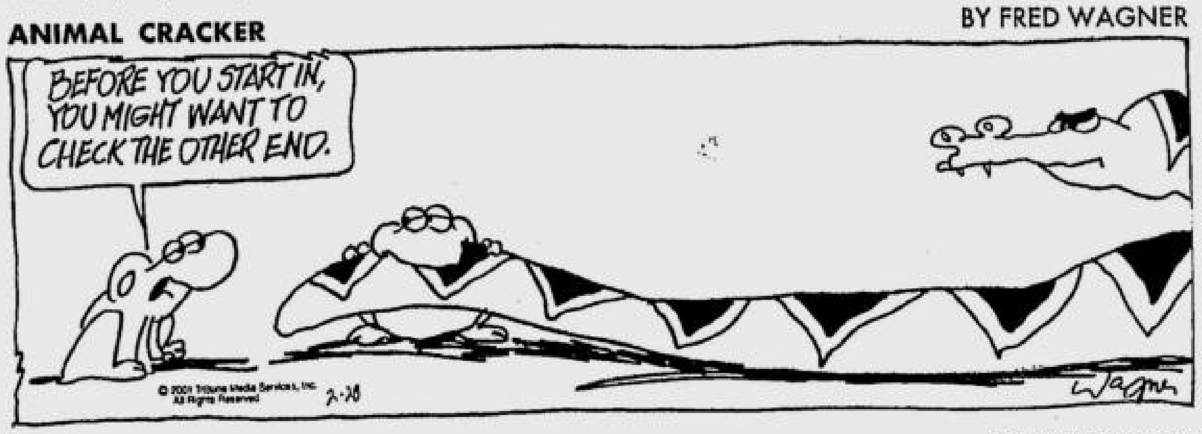
ANIMAL CRACKER

BY FRED WAGNER


BEFORE YOU START IN, YOU MIGHT WANT TO CHECK THE OTHER END.
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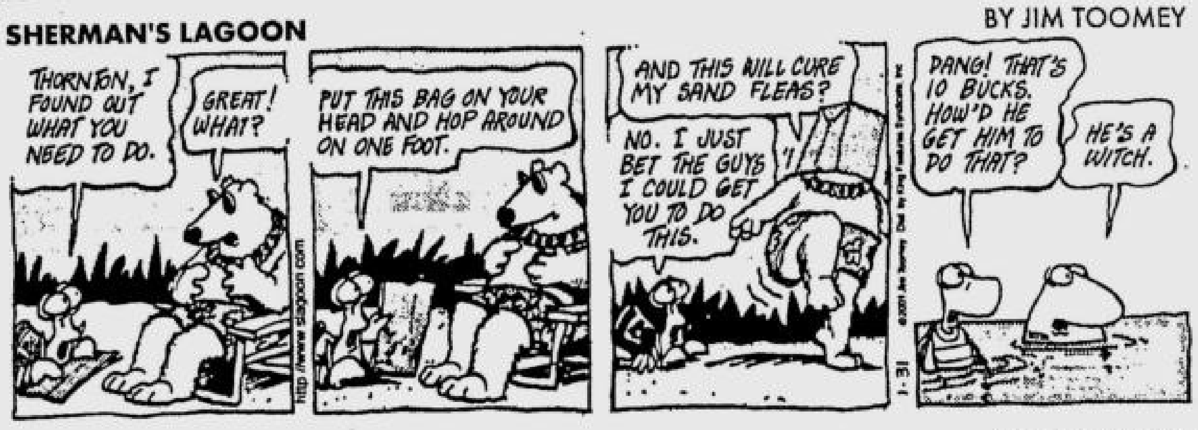
2-28
Wagner

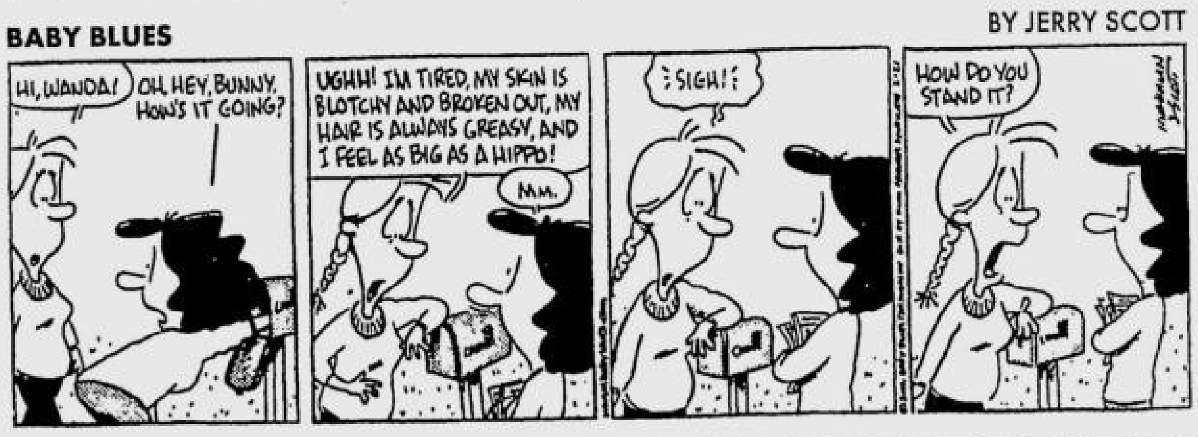
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


THORNTON, I FOUND OUT WHAT YOU NEED TO DO.
GREAT! WHAT?
PUT THIS BAG ON YOUR HEAD AND HOP AROUND ON ONE FOOT.
AND THIS WILL CURE MY SAND FLEAS?
NO. I JUST BET THE GUYS I COULD GET YOU TO DO THIS.
DANG! THAT'S 10 BUCKS. HOW'D HE GET HIM TO DO THAT?
HE'S A WITCH.
http://www.slagoon.com
1-31

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


HI, WANDA!
OH, HEY, BUNNY. HOW'S IT GOING?
UGHH! I'M TIRED, MY SKIN IS BLOTCHY AND BROKEN OUT, MY HAIR IS ALWAYS GREASY, AND I FEEL AS BIG AS A HIPPO!
MM.
SIGH!
HOW DO YOU STAND IT?

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Jamie Bell, Billy Crystal, Quincy Jones, Prince Albert, Albert Einstein, Michael Caine, Rita Tushingham

Happy Birthday: Your humanitarian approach to life will put you in the limelight at group functions. Fight for your beliefs, and you will have a good chance to win. This is the year not to be a bystander but instead to play a major role in instigating much needed changes. Your numbers: 7, 13, 17, 21, 29, 33

ARIES (March 21-April 19): You won't want to deal with other people's problems today, but it is best not to refuse. Rewards can be yours if you give a little of your time.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Social activities will be a must. Combine work with pleasure and show your worth. There is much you can accomplish if you put your mind to it.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Put your efforts into moneymaking ventures. You can get recognition at work if you present your ideas. Be sure to talk to those in higher positions about your goals and directions.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Take some time out to do things with children. They need your love and support more than you think. Your ability to work with your hands should be put to good use.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Renovations to your home will be costly but will pay off in the long run. Try to enlist the help of friends and family to keep the overhead down.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Don't let problems while traveling or dealing with relatives cause stress. Your health will suffer if you don't relax. Past acquaintances are likely to come back into your life. Assess what they can do for you before you proceed.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Don't buy expensive items from friends or acquaintances. You must channel your thoughts into your job. You will have to watch your budget closely.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): It will be hard to contain your feelings. Poor drivers will push you to the limit while in transit. Don't take your frustrations out on the ones you love.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): You will need to take a look at your motives. Be sure that you are getting involved in new projects because you believe in them and not because someone else is joining.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You can express yourself well at group functions. Don't be afraid to push your beliefs. You will inspire those you talk to. This is the time to take a leadership position.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Be careful not to ruffle the feathers of the heavyweights at work. This is the time to work hard and make yourself indispensable, not push your needs and desires.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): You just want to enjoy life. Don't hesitate to join groups or become involved in social activities that include colleagues. You need to be around other people who can stimulate your creative imagination and contribute to your new direction.

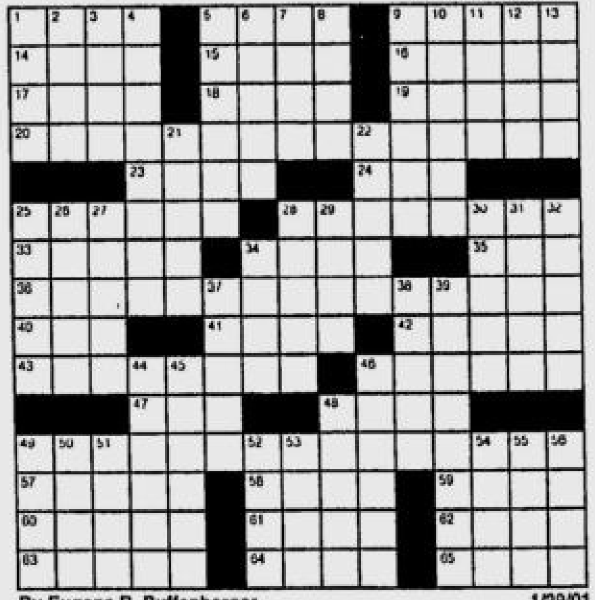
Birthday Baby: You are blessed with great discipline that will help you see matters through to completion. You are engaging, inventive and good at discerning what will and what won't work.

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com

ACROSS

1 Dangles bait on the water
5 Infield cover, for short
9 Tie the knot
14 Bruins of sports
15 Gannon College city
16 Nebraska city
17 Having wings
18 Money plant?
19 Extend a subscription
20 Neil Armstrong or Buzz Aldrin
23 Matched outfits
24 Hawaii's ocean: abbr.
25 19th-century round dances
28 Cupid
33 Emulate Cicero
34 Small combo
35 Govt. med. grp.
36 Sally Ride or Mae Jemison
40 Requirement for a UFO
41 Throw in the towel
42 Two-masted vessel
43 Computer displays
46 Anchor-chain openings
47 Wallach or Whitney
48 Pelvic projections
49 Jake Garn or John Glenn
57 Divided Asian nation
58 Flat-bottomed boat
59 Poker fee
60 Up and about
61 Incite
62 Man from Edinburgh
63 Irascible
64 Prognosticator
65 Highland hats



By Eugene R. Puffenberger
Houston, TX
1/29/01

DOWN

1 Twofold
2 Rights org.
3 Blueprint
4 Site of the Circus Hall of Fame
5 Entices
6 Zodiac ram
7 Outer covering
8 Rozelle or Rose
9 Pestle's partner
10 Set an arbitrary punishment
11 Rajah's wife
12 Ms. Perlman
13 Exhibit boredom
21 Turn back
22 Tracker's trail
25 Errand boy
26 Long, narrow ridge
27 Keats poem
28 Musical upbeat
29 Catcher's glove
30 Sinatra song, "__ Life"
31 Cease-fire
32 Curses
34 Showing strain
37 Fit out
38 Giraffe kin
39 Informative TV
44 Double-dealing
45 Chicago cow owner
46 Batsman
48 Door hardware
49 Card game for three
50 Stance
51 Carney and Linkletter
52 Musical composition
53 Decoy
54 Andes people
55 Bomb type
56 New Jersey team

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

E	L	A	P	S	I	N	G	■	S	M	A	C	K	S
P	I	N	E	T	R	E	E	■	P	A	R	A	N	A
I	N	T	R	O	I	T	S	■	A	I	S	L	E	D
S	T	E	I	N	S	■	T	U	N	N	E	L	E	D
T	I	L	L	Y	■	C	A	N	S	■	N	U	L	L
L	E	O	S	■	P	O	T	S	■	P	A	S	S	E
E	S	P	■	F	O	R	E	T	E	L	L	■	■	■
S	T	E	W	A	R	T	■	A	W	E	S	O	M	E
■	■	■	A	T	T	E	S	T	E	D	■	V	A	N
B	L	O	T	S	■	G	E	E	S	■	N	E	R	D
R	I	C	E	■	F	E	E	D	■	M	A	R	I	O
O	V	E	R	C	A	S	T	■	P	A	S	S	E	R
N	E	L	S	O	N	■	H	A	T	C	H	E	T	S
T	O	O	K	O	N	■	E	V	A	L	U	A	T	E
E	N	T	I	T	Y	■	D	I	S	E	A	S	E	S

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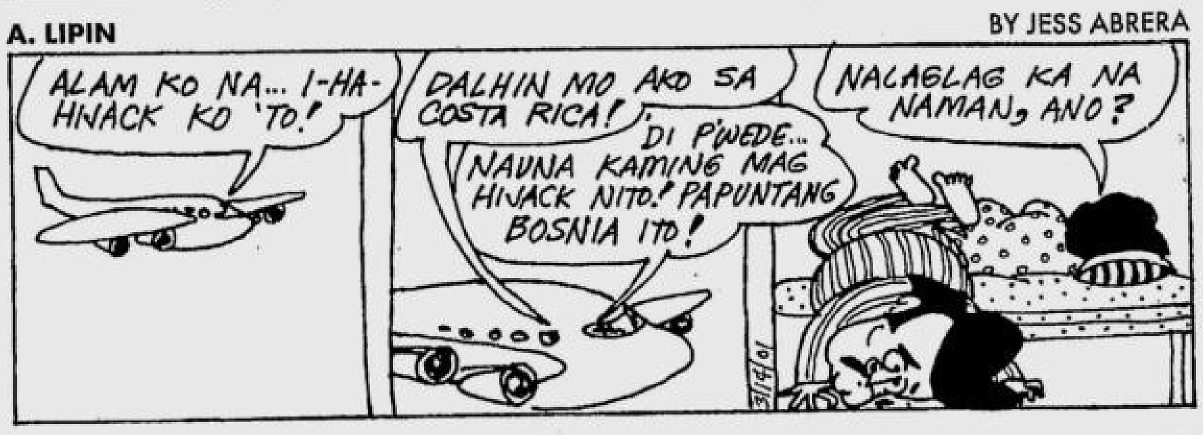
1/29/01

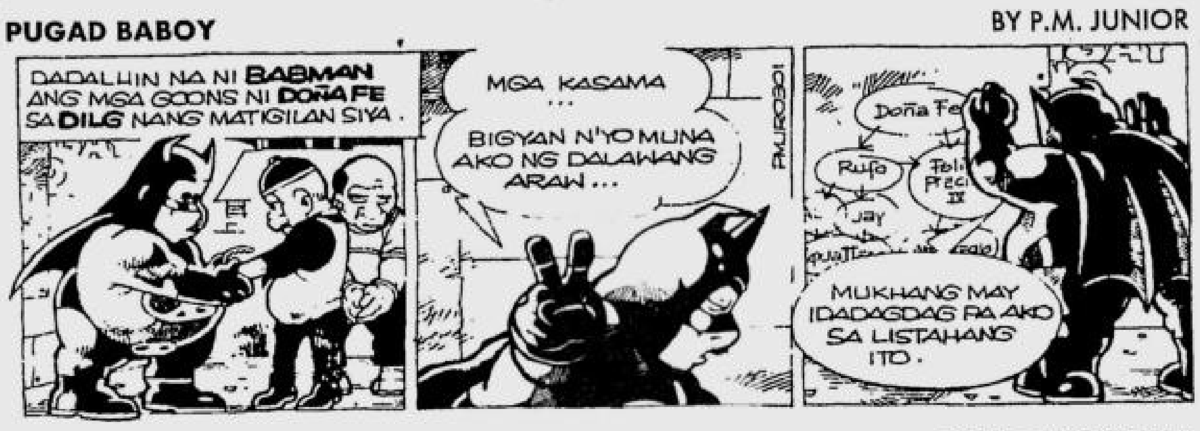
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


ALAM KO NA... I-HA-HIJACK KO 'TO!
DALHIN MO AKO SA COSTA RICA!
DI P'WEDE... NAUNA KAMING MAG HIJACK NITO! PAPUNTANG BOSNIA ITO!
NALAGLAG KA NA NAMAN, ANO?
3/14/01

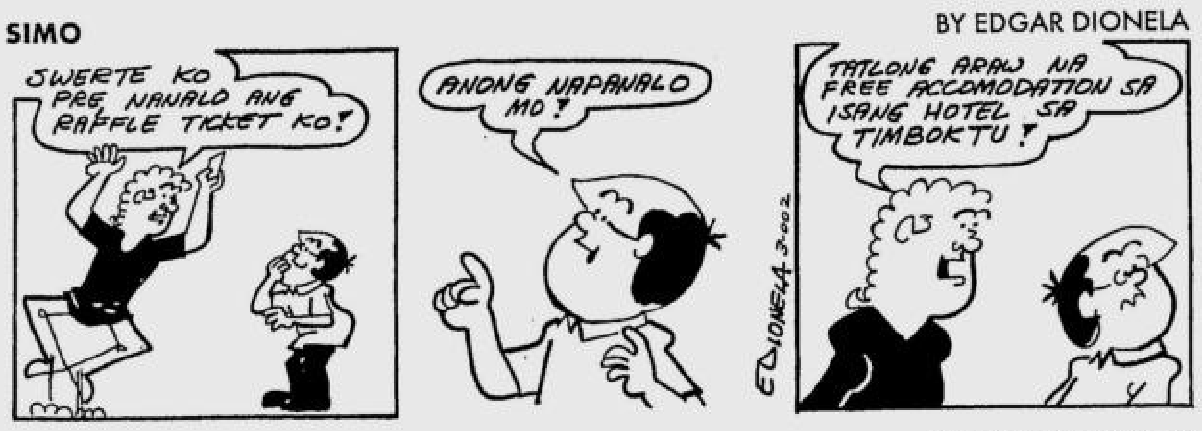
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


DADALHIN NA NI BABMAN ANG MGA GOONS NI DOÑA FE SA DILG NANG MATIGILAN SIYA.
MGA KASAMA ... BIGYAN N'YO MUNA AKO NG DALAWANG ARAW...
Doña Fe
Rufo
Jay
MUKHANG MAY IDADAGDAG PA AKO SA LISTAHANG ITO.

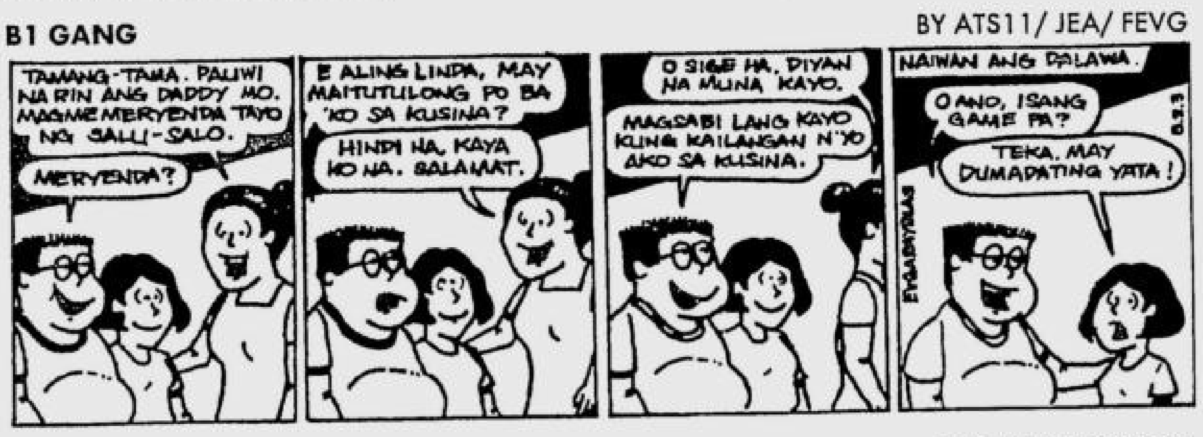
SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


SWERTE KO PRE NANALO ANG RAFFLE TICKET KO!
ANONG NAPANALO MO?
TATLONG ARAW NA FREE ACCOMODATION SA ISANG HOTEL SA TIMBOKTU!
DIONELA 3-002

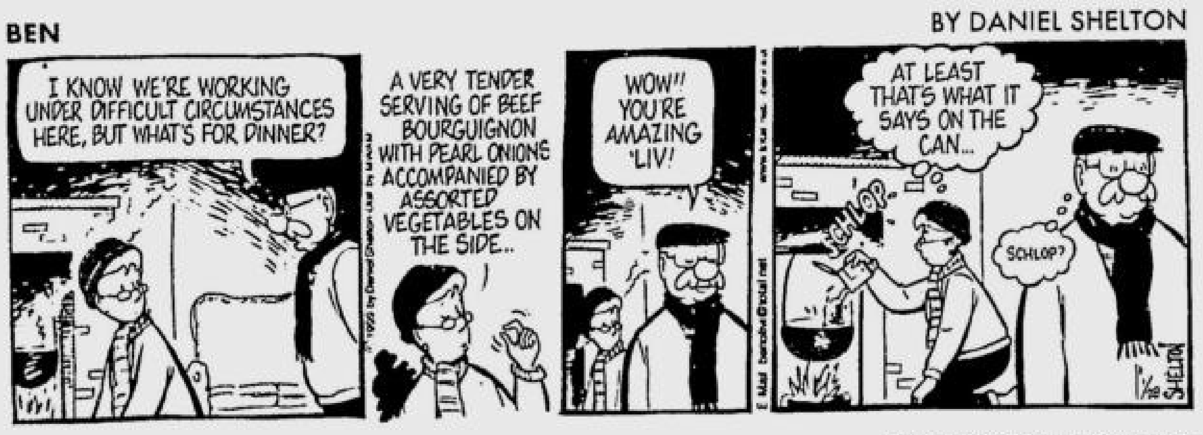
B1 GANG

BY ATS11/ JEA/ FEVG


TAMANG-TAMA. PAUWI NA RIN ANG DADDY MO. MAGMEMERYENDA TAYO NG SALU-SALO.
MERYENDA?
E ALING LINDA, MAY MAITUTULONG PO BA 'KO SA KUSINA?
HINDI NA, KAYA KO NA. SALAMAT.
O SIGE HA. DIYAN NA MUNA KAYO.
MAGSABI LANG KAYO KUNG KAILANGAN N'YO AKO SA KUSINA.
NAIWAN ANG DALAWA.
O ANO, ISANG GAME PA?
TEKA, MAY DUMADATING YATA!

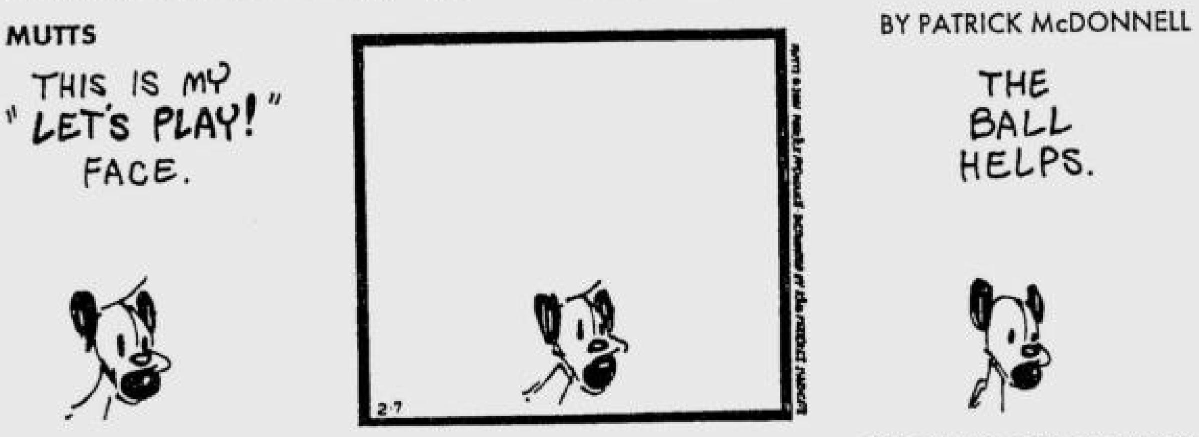
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


I KNOW WE'RE WORKING UNDER DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES HERE, BUT WHAT'S FOR DINNER?
A VERY TENDER SERVING OF BEEF BOURGUIGNON WITH PEARL ONIONS ACCOMPANIED BY ASSORTED VEGETABLES ON THE SIDE..
WOW!! YOU'RE AMAZING 'LIV!
SCHLOP
AT LEAST THAT'S WHAT IT SAYS ON THE CAN...
SCHLOP?
SHELTON

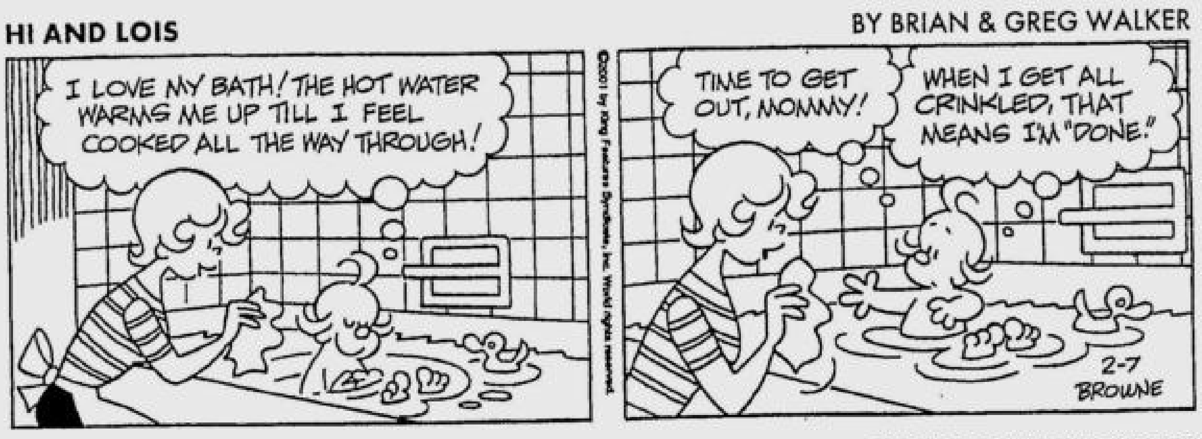
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


THIS IS MY "LET'S PLAY!" FACE.
2·7
THE BALL HELPS.

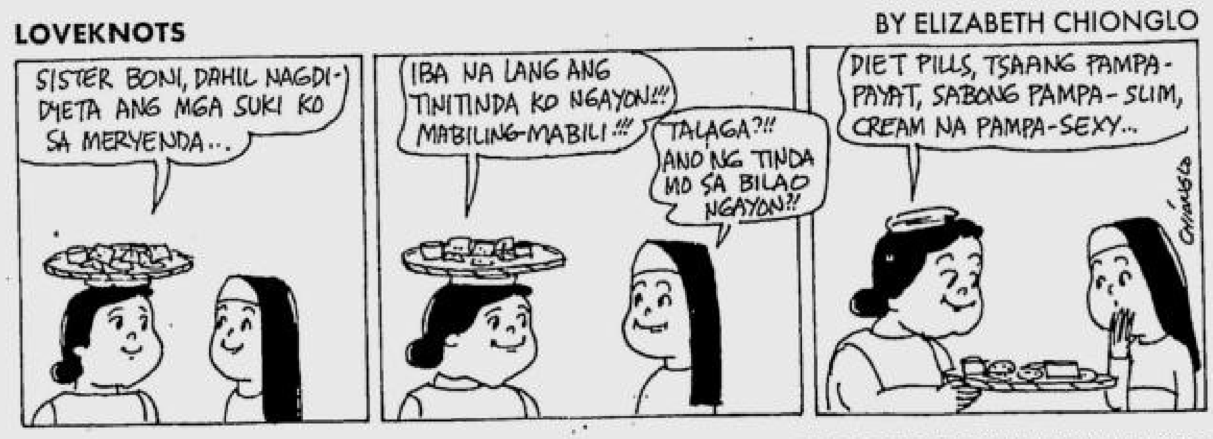
HI AND LOIS

BY BRIAN & GREG WALKER


I LOVE MY BATH! THE HOT WATER WARMS ME UP TILL I FEEL COOKED ALL THE WAY THROUGH!
TIME TO GET OUT, MOMMY!
WHEN I GET ALL CRINKLED, THAT MEANS I'M "DONE."
2-7
BROWNE

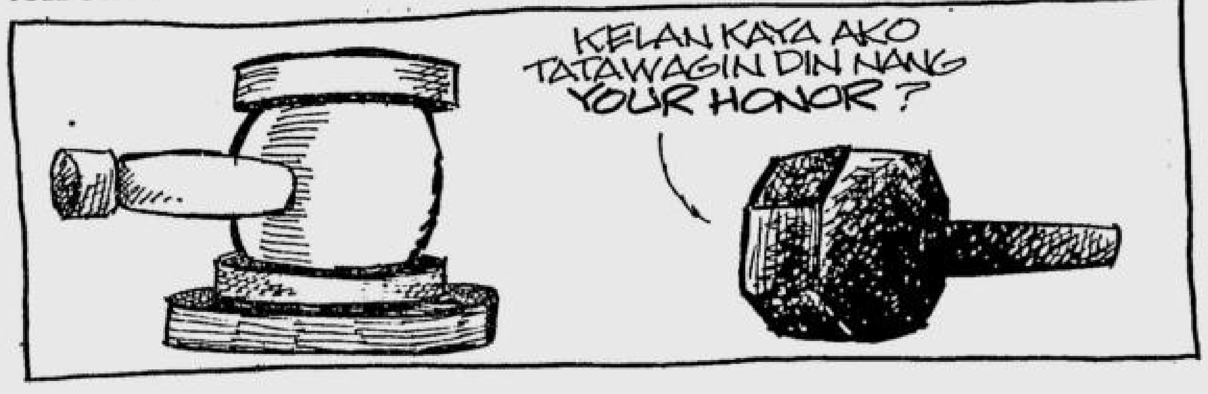
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


SISTER BONI, DAHIL NAGDI-DYETA ANG MGA SUKI KO SA MERYENDA...
IBA NA LANG ANG TINITINDA KO NGAYON!!! MABILING-MABILI!!!
TALAGA?!! ANO'NG TINDA MO SA BILAO NGAYON?!
DIET PILLS, TSAANG PAMPA-PAYAT, SABONG PAMPA-SLIM, CREAM NA PAMPA-SEXY...
CHIONGLO

TULDOK NI TITO

BY PAPU & TATUM MILAMBILING


KELAN KAYA AKO TATAWAGIN DIN NANG YOUR HONOR?

Telecast of MTV Rebirth

LAST Feb. 17, more than 15,000 people flocked to Fort Bonifacio Global City to witness MTV's Rebirth Concert. The all-night musicfest was topbilled by foreign acts Collective Soul and Plus One, together with leading local artists such as Barbie's Cradle, Brownbeat All Star, Cynthia Alexander, The Dawn, Eraserheads, Grace Nono, Kaya, Lani Misalucha, Parokya ni Edgar, Passage, Pops Fernandez, Razorback, Rivermaya, Sandwich, Side A, Slapshock, Teeth and Wolfgang.

If you weren't lucky enough to have been there in person, or if you just want another dose of pure music, the Rebirth Concert Special on MTV Philippines UHF Channel 41 will be shown on these dates: March 17 at 1 p.m. and 8 p.m., and on March 25 at 1 p.m. and 8 p.m. For Sky Cable subscribers, the show can be seen on CH32, and for Home Cable subscribers on CH41, at the same times.

Polo Jeans gets sporty

POLO Jeans Co. has gone sporty in its latest collection with colors such as Cambridge blue, clover green, tail-light red, orange crush, new gold and Atlantic blue highlighting their knitwear.

Vintage hockey-inspired logos come in large bold prints and are front and center in many of the styles. Sleeve piecing with matching details carry through the collegiate sports theme. Bottoms with authentic varsity sports detailing in rugged silhouettes are also a staple.

An interesting and fresh new silhouette has been introduced—the carpenter cell phone pants which are available in several styles, from denim to cotton twill.

Classic jean jackets with simple clean embroidery are staple pieces, too.

Polo Jeans is available at the Corte de las Palmas of the Alabang Town Center, SM Megamall, Rustan's Makati and at Robinsons Place Manila. Polo Jeans Co. is exclusively distributed locally by Stores Specialists Inc., a member of the Rustan Group of Companies which has warned consumers to beware of imitations of their products.

'Healthquarters' for Sta. Rosa teens launched by GMA young stars

THERE is nothing like a launch at a mall with young stars to attract a crowd of thousands. GMA teen stars Kevin Vernal and Tin-Tin Gonzaga of "Bubble Gang" and Xaxa Manalo and Champagne Morales, both Metro Pop winners, recently graced the formal opening of Sta. Rosa Teens Healthquarters. No, THQ is not in the Target Mall of Sta. Rosa, Laguna. It's 2 meters away.

Teens Healthquarters was designed to attract young people to get their health questions answered before they got into risky situations like casual sex, harassment, incest, date rape, teen pregnancy, depression and suicide. "Health is not just the absence of disease," explains Aurora Silayan-Go, president of the Foundation for Adolescent Development (FAD) Inc., an NGO which designed the service center. The THQ therefore is highly educational and encompasses "relationship issues" as the scheduled educational sessions reflect.

Medical services are also available for pregnancy test, pap smear, family planning, STD and HIV diagnoses, blood typing, drug testing as well as other teen concerns like skin care, dental care and weight management.

The Sta. Rosa THQ, says Go, is the third outlet being developed for standardization as a franchise model with private sector partners. In Sta. Rosa, the private organization partner is Responsible Parenthood-Maternal and Child Health Association of the Philippines Inc. (RP-MCHAP). According to lawyer Manuel del Rosario, president of this newly formed NGO and group human resource director of Universal Robina Corp., they look forward to serving young people as part of pre-employment by giving them "information on managing independence, how workers can cope with being away from home, sexual harassment in the workplace, and vices versus productivity." This special target marker is an opportunity unique to Calabarzon, the industrial zone of Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon.

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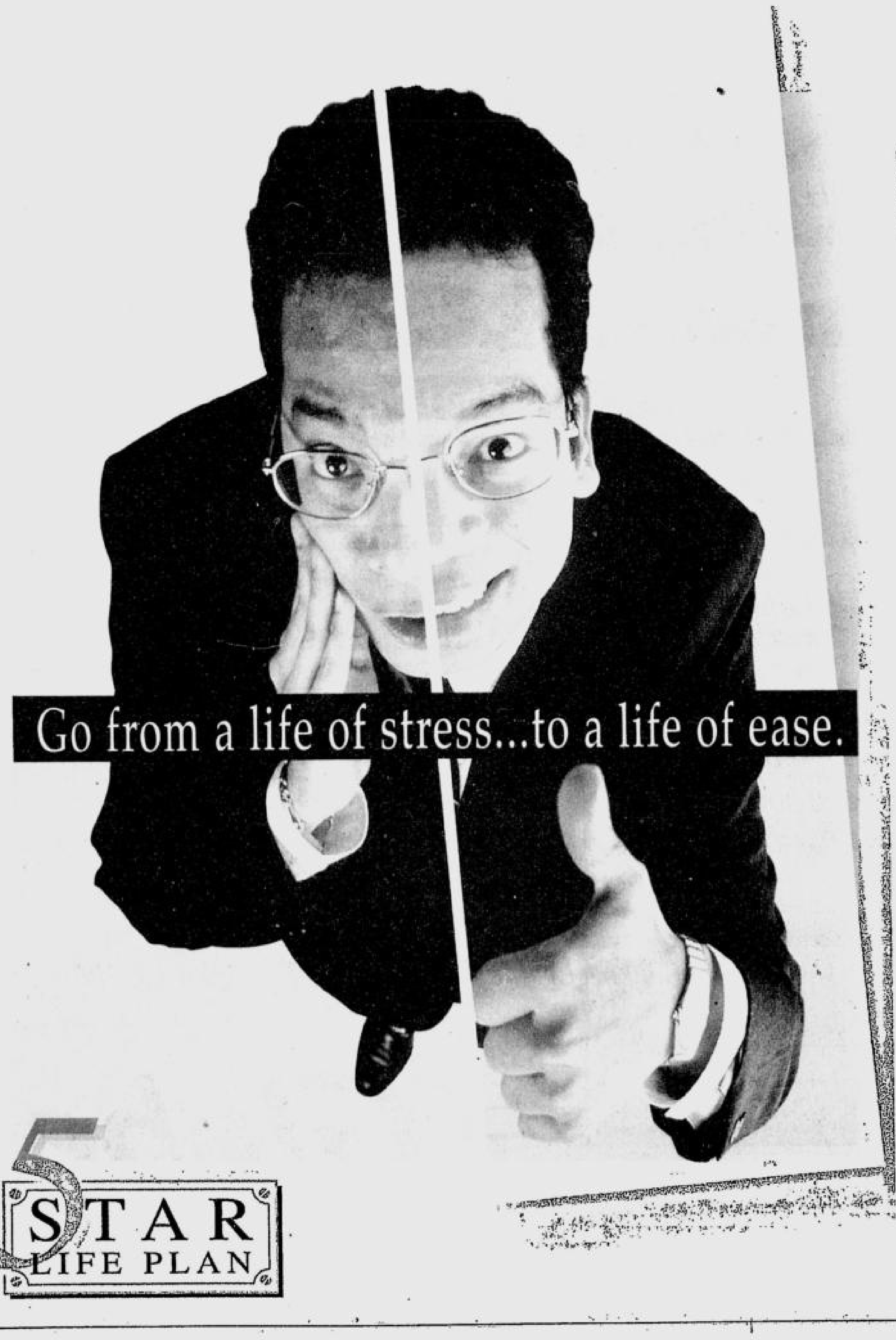
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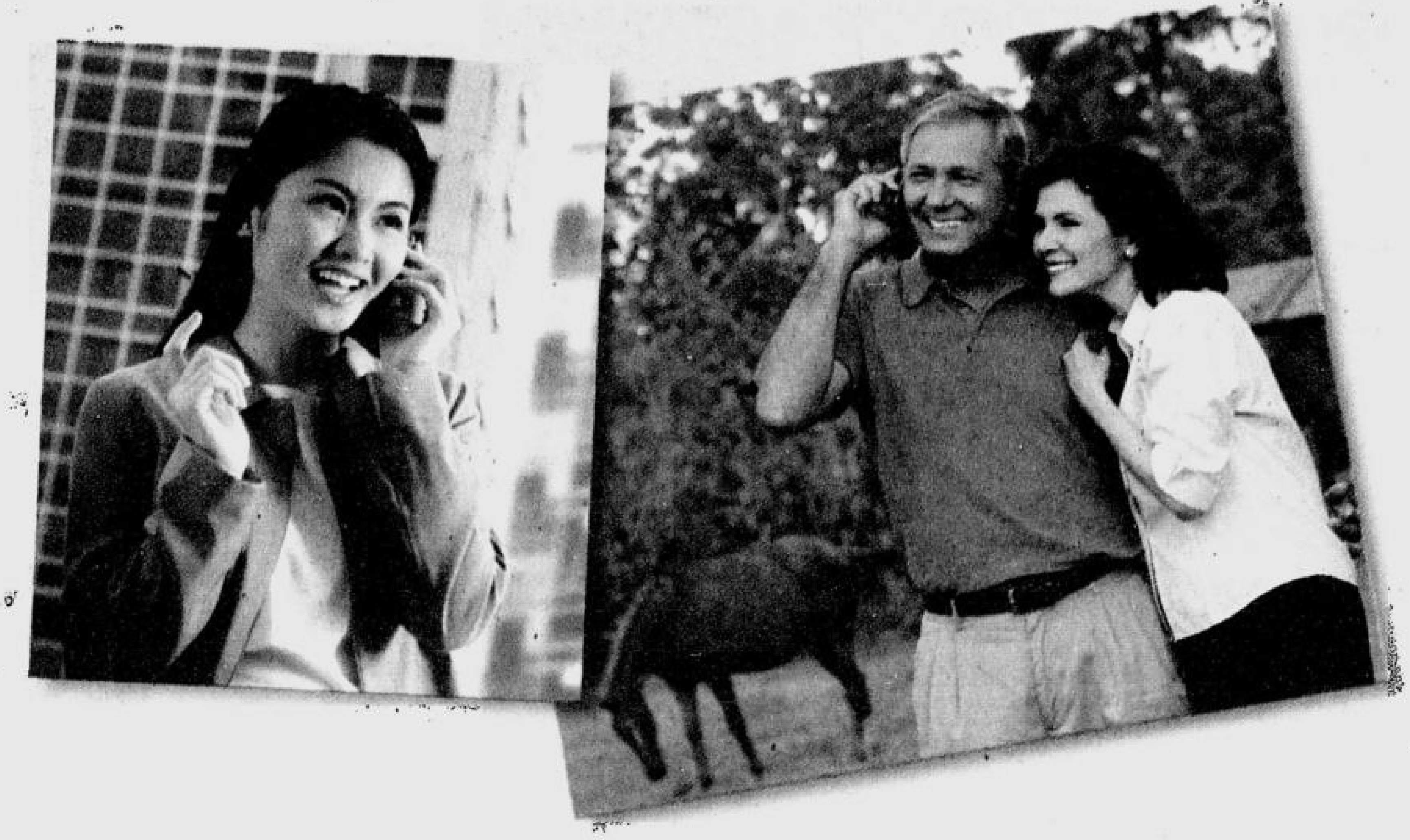

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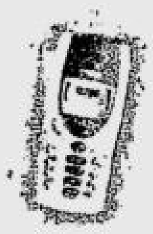


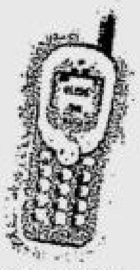
Nokia 8250

Nokia 8890

Nokia 5110i

Siemens S40

Nokia 3310



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₱13,000	₱11,000	₱ 9,000	₱ 7,000
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N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
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₱6,590	₱6,290	₱5,940	₱5,490
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   b. Termination of plan under the period of 18 months shall be subject to a termination fee of ₱10,000 per line.
   c. Transfer of ownership under a period of 18 months from date of activation will require the settlement of a ₱10,000 transfer fee per line (exclusive of current administrative charges).

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- Gapan Rd., Olongapo: Mar. 12-16
- San Fernando, La Union: Mar. 16-23
- San Nicolas, Tarlac: Mar. 19-23
- Cauayan, Isabela: Mar. 26-30
- Naguilian Road, Baguio: Mar. 26-30

SOUTH LUZON:
- Kawit, Cavite: Mar. 5-9
- Nable St., Batangas City: Mar. 12-23
- Timbang St., Calamba: Mar. 19-23
- Gulang-gulang, Lucena: Mar. 26-30

VISAYAS:
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- A.S. Fortuna St., Mandaue: Mar. 12-16
- La Paz, Iloilo City: Mar. 19-23
- Galo St., Bacolod City: Mar. 26-30

MINDANAO:
- Jones Circle, Davao City: Mar. 5-9
- Km.7 Bangkal, Davao City: Mar. 12-16
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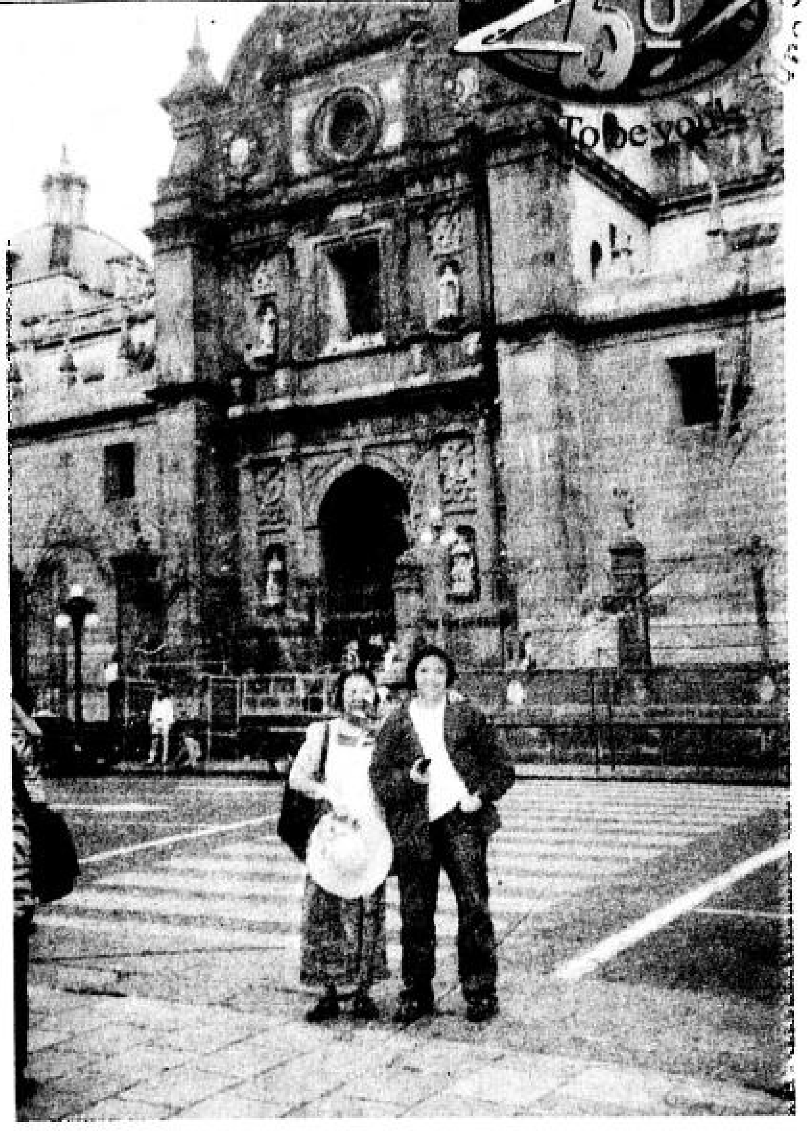
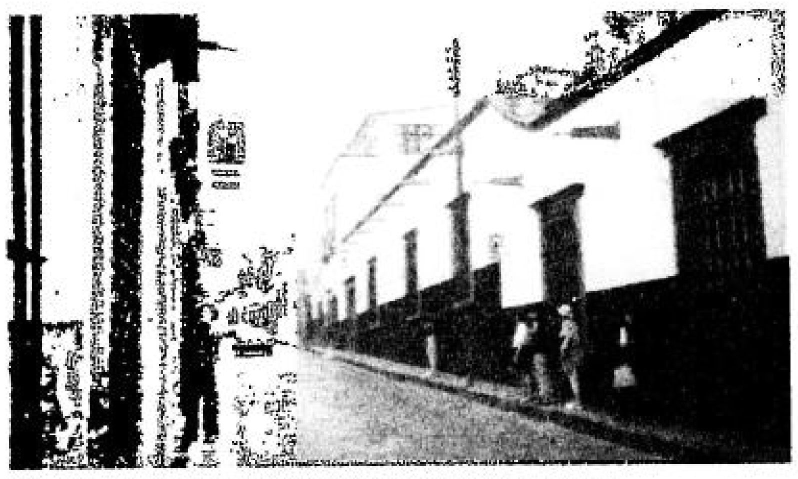
TAKING a break for the nth time at the Pyramid of the Sun.

MY mom and I with the Pyramid of the Moon dwarfing us.

In search of the House of Capulet and Leonardo DiCaprio


MY Auntie Beling and I with church number 2,697 (just kidding)


I SWEAR this is San Miguel de Allende not Zamboanga!

By Tammy David
2bU! Correspondent

I WENT to Mexico when I was 14 for one reason. No, it wasn't for the spicy food, the Chicano boys galore, the shrine of Guadalupe, or the beautiful weather of Acapulco. The reason I agreed to accompany my mom was because it would afford me the chance to visit the House of Capulet. Oh yes, the castle where Baz Luhrmann's production of William Shakespeare's "Romeo + Juliet" was shot. I admit that five years ago, I was head over heels in love with Leonardo DiCaprio.

The summer before my high school life started, I wanted to go on an exchange student program to England with my friends but my parents didn't let me. I felt sad, of course, since I wanted to stalk Liam Gallagher at the time, but my offered me Mexico instead. At first I didn't want to go because I knew I would be the official *alalay* and there were about a billion churches that I'm sure my mom would want to visit and make wishes in since it was supposed to be lucky.

> It didn't take long for her mom to convince her to come to Mexico. When she remembered her favorite actor shot 'Romeo + Juliet' there, she broke out, 'Mexico here I come!'

My Leonardo

I didn't know anything about Mexico except for the food and the famous Rio Grande where the "TNTs" swim and, of course, "Marimar" (at the time the Philippines was gripped by telenovela fever). Then I remembered a couple of pre-"Romeo + Juliet" interviews in which Claire Danes complained about Mexico (by the way, she wasn't banned from Mexico). So she and DiCaprio had shot "Romeo + Juliet" there. Mexico, here I come.

I went to the castle four days after patiently waiting for the tours to different places to end. I remember the time my mom and I had to run up to the Castillo de Chapultepec double time since it was going to close in 10 minutes. I almost cried when I was in the exact place where the Capulets' ball was held. I almost kissed the ground and practically rolled on the floor so that I could touch the dust left by my Romeo.

After the whole castle-searching thing, I felt content. So it didn't matter if I got mugged or I didn't get to see the famous cloak of Juan Diego with the image of the Lady of Guadalupe. Mexico is like the Philippines. The place is somewhat dirty, it has its share of beggars, the currency is the peso, the food looks disgusting but tastes great, and there are lots of churches filled with devotees. My mom and I didn't have a hard time getting around since my Tito Nelson knows Mexico very well and he speaks Spanish. We also had a great tour group, but some of them were certified shopaholics.

On my own

Whenever my mom was asleep or the whole tour group was shopping till they dropped, I went around by myself. There were times I felt scared when people looked at me since I was dressed in the usual tourist get-up (jacket even though it was not cold, enormous belt bag with a camera in one hand and city map in the other).

GETTING chummy with the locals at San Miguel de Allende

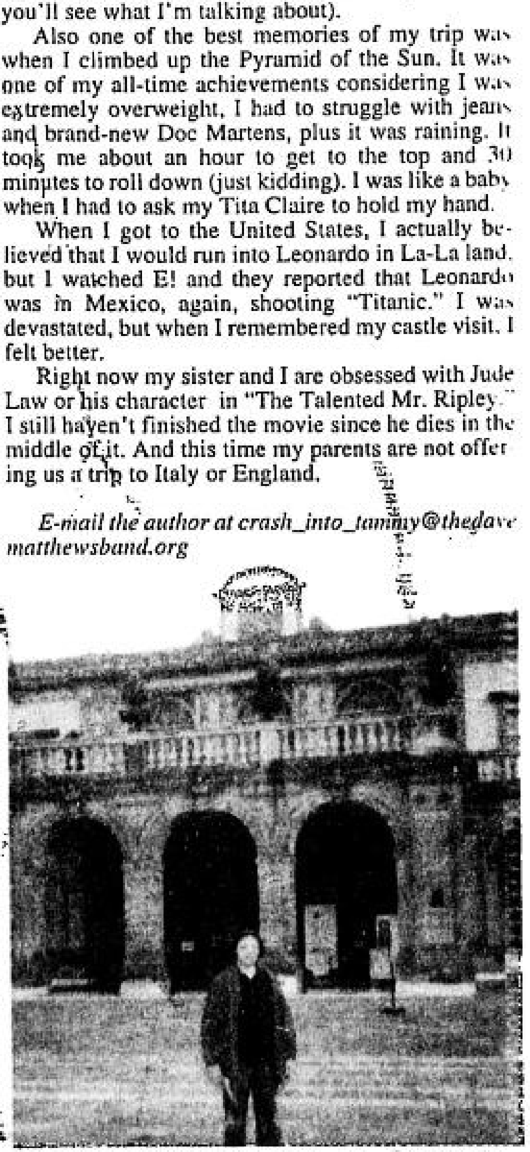
We went to beautiful places like Zocalo (check out Westlife's "Fool Again" video), the Museum of Anthropology, and San Miguel de Allende, where we visited Filipino painter Romeo Tabuena who has been living there for more than 40 years. We also visited Taxco, where silver is cheap, and the beautiful shores of Acapulco, where we saw the beach houses of famous people and the cliff divers of La Quebrada (Check out Elvis Presley's "Fun in Acapulco" and you'll see what I'm talking about).

Also one of the best memories of my trip was when I climbed up the Pyramid of the Sun. It was one of my all-time achievements considering I was extremely overweight, I had to struggle with jeans and brand-new Doc Martens, plus it was raining. It took me about an hour to get to the top and 30 minutes to roll down (just kidding). I was like a baby when I had to ask my Tita Claire to hold my hand.

When I got to the United States, I actually believed that I would run into Leonardo in La-La land, but I watched E! and they reported that Leonardo was in Mexico, again, shooting "Titanic." I was devastated, but when I remembered my castle visit, I felt better.

Right now my sister and I are obsessed with Jude Law or his character in "The Talented Mr. Ripley." I still haven't finished the movie since he dies in the middle of it. And this time my parents are not offering us a trip to Italy or England.

E-mail the author at crash_into_tammy@thedavematthewsband.org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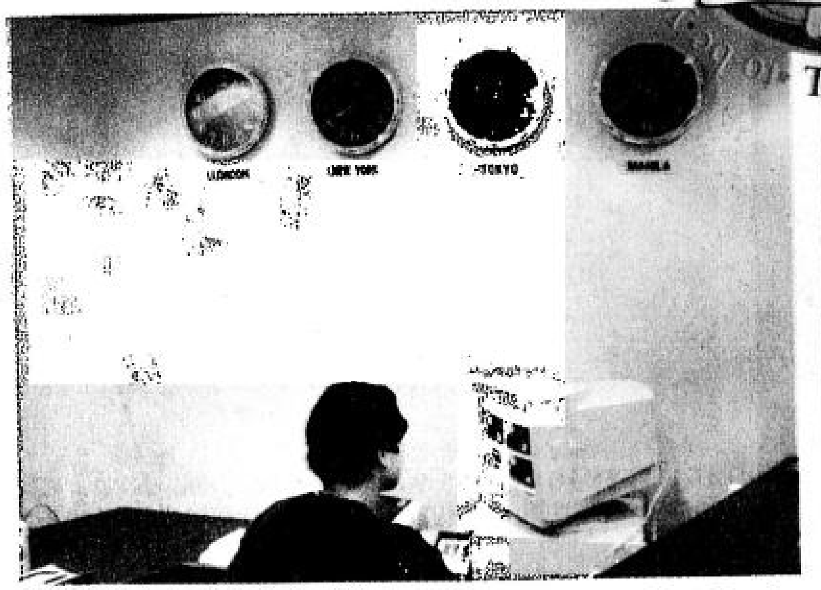
THE AUTHOR and his girlfriend Monique


SENDING their alibis via the Net

STILL on an eat-and-drink-all-you-can bonanza

Not quite Bali, but something just as welcome

By Marco Diaz

How does one soothe the one's nerves after being bumped off a flight? The answer is at the Naia lounge

I'M a travel writer and with every faraway land and culture I visit, I am duty-bound to recount my experience. Now that it's all over and the repercussions are hopefully not that great, I'll tell the whole world of this great and utterly secret romantic vacation my girlfriend Monique and I had all planned out for the Christmas break. A year of plotting and planning was invested into this week-long getaway, which would see us living in the exotic hillside cabanas and powdery beaches of Bali.

Nobody would know we were leaving Manila (much less the country). We were two people simply dropping off the face of the planet.

All the bags were packed and we were running a bit late, only to find out that after going through an hour of infernal traffic, we had been bumped off the flight and would have to wait 12 hours for the next airplane to Indonesia. So, tempers flaring and with 43,200 seconds to go until we could finally leave for the vacation our relationship really needed, we had to figure out what to do until our flight the next day. We stumbled aimlessly around the Duty Free area before we chanced upon the stairwell leading to Club Manila, the Naia lounge where, for a little more than $10, we could have a half-day's vacation that was awesome… but not quite Bali.

Stay

We were definitely not too eager to take the other option of carrying our bags home in the middle of the night and haggling with hoodlum taxi drivers wanting to extort us for the ride. So we paid the admission price to stay the night and make use of the lounge and its facilities. Starting the long wait by sitting in the classy lounge, we talked in front of a large aquarium filled with tropical fish while sipping exquisite Australian red wine. There is so much to say for the virtues of having a gorgeous and intelligent girlfriend. Intense conversations can last forever and during times of comfortable silence, you get the pleasure of simply falling for her eyes.

Slightly drunk and in need of sustenance, I wolfed down a large pepper steak and a bowl of chunky fries while Nique had a big serving of fish 'n' chips with an order of Japanese *gyoza* on the side. We were on a mission. If we were entitled to an eat-and-drink-all-you-can bonanza, we were going to enjoy tonight with no holds barred. We were just two weirdoes with the pictures to prove it—eating, drinking and being merry at the airport lounge a few days before Christmas.

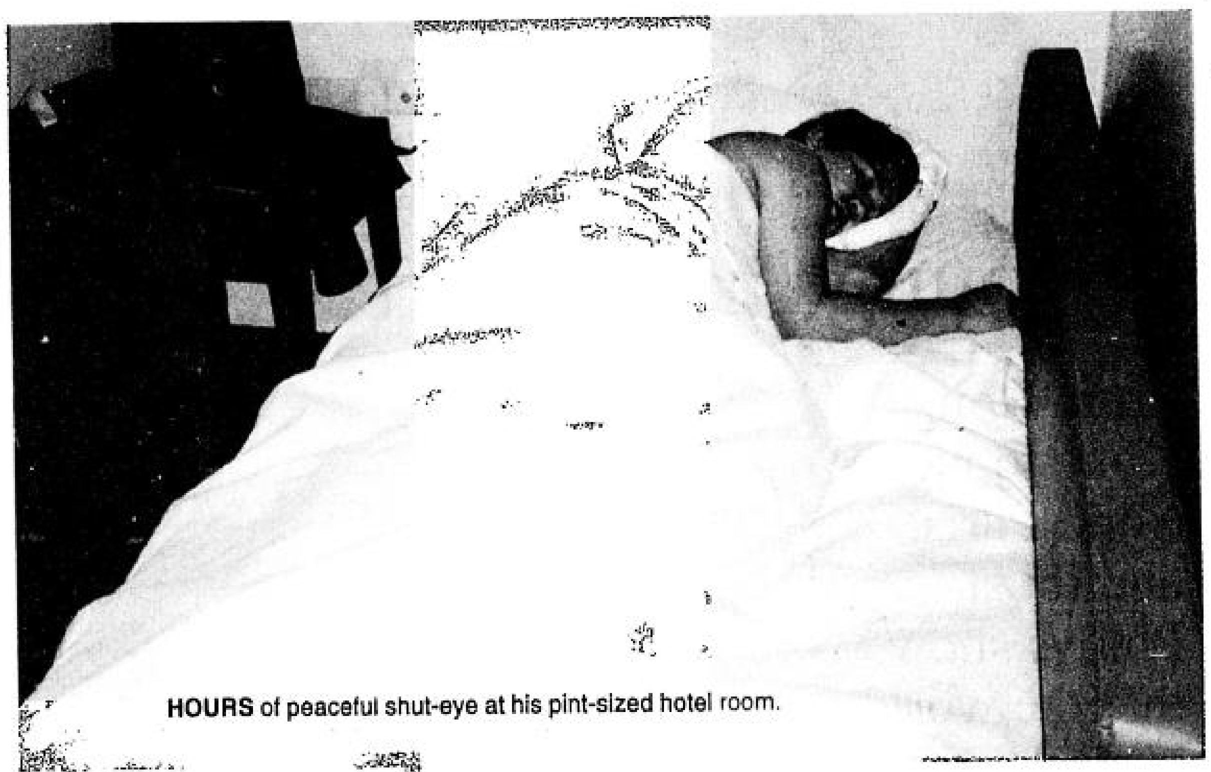
Massage

Wondering how we could further exploit the services of Club Manila, we proceeded to a large, dimly lit room where over a dozen masseuses were waiting to knead our muscles into submission. I totally lost myself in the bliss of the massage and could care less how Nique's massage was going (by the moans emanating from her seat, I'm sure we were enjoying it to the same degree). From the feet, thighs, back, shoulders to my head, the two masseuses were focused on introducing me to a most addicting drug: an hour of muscle-jellying, reflexology-induced pleasure. During the massage, I noticed in one moment of enlightenment that the room and the women who worked within its confines were the antithesis of the medieval torture chambers. This room's sole purpose was to relax, soothe and massage the victim's muscles and bones into mellow capitulation.

Crawling back to the lounge with smiles stretching from ear to ear, we used the club's business center to send bogus e-mail and faxes to friends and family just to make sure that nobody would come looking for us for at least a week. I'm pretty sure that businessmen actually work in this area, since the place was equipped with every communication device known to man, but at that moment, we were focused on tomorrow where we would be swimming in our cabinside eternity pool, staring out at the Balinese horizon. After our alibis over the Internet highway, we continued to the posh smoking room where we had a few drinks too many and half a dozen cigarettes more before turning in for the night.

Wake-up call

I entered the showers, took a quick bath and proceeded to my freezing cold room, a pint-sized version of a hotel room. Five hours later, a wake-up call at the door and with a hangover tingling our temples, we slung our backpacks on our shoulders and thought, "Wow, faced with the hassle of a missed flight and a 12-hour wait, we really made a smashing sensation out of a really bad situation!"

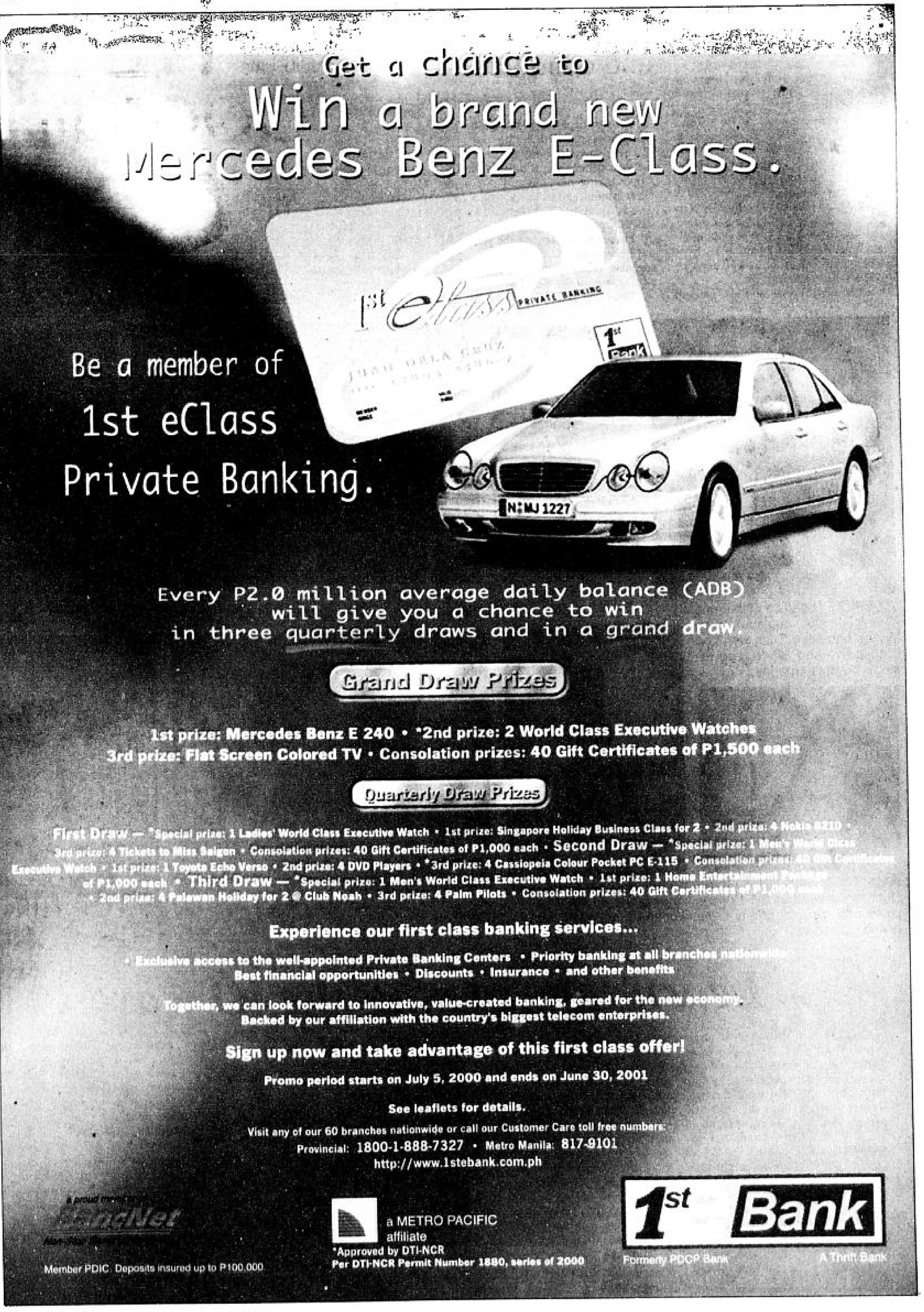

HOURS of peaceful shut-eye at his pint-sized hotel room.

For the paltry price that Monique and I paid, we had a 12-hour stay at a lounge comparable to a five-star hotel discreetly hidden in the bosom of Naia's Duty Free area. Now, if they could only fit in a jacuzzi, tennis court, an Olympic-size swimming pool and a glorious sunset, no one would have to leave the country at all.

You don't really have to take a flight to all these exotic and far-off destinations like we did. You and your companion can relax and enjoy at anytime. This theory applies even if you two are just chilling out at home watching VCDs: It is this ability and comfort with each other that makes couples stick together until their golden anniversaries with the grandkids running all-rambunctious around your knees. Anyway, that's what my grandfather used to say. As for this couple who got stranded at Naia, Nique and I still boarded the flight and went off to Bali for our awesome getaway.

HAVING one of those intense conversations that last forever.

TAKING a break.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VICTORIOUS. Style file Stephen Gan, the man behind Visionaire and V magazines

BEHIND THE BAR.
Thea Rolles rules the NYC nightlife.

STREET SMARTS. Ira Sajor and Farrah Carbonell strolling on the Upper East Side, New York.

BEATLEMANIA. Adine Pangilinan, Joyce Jimenez and Mar G Ocampo at Madame Tussaud's in London

STYLE SAVVY. Josephine de la Rosa, New York-based interior designer, and Mike De Villa, F&B director of Central Park West, outside Chaos

PINOYORKER Ronnie Alejandro and Angelique Villaraza at Balthazar in New York

ON THE ROAD with Mark Punzalan and Stacey Brennan

AT THE BACKSTAGE of "Miss Saigon" with Lea Salonga and quarter-Pinoy Chris

DESIGNER AND MUSE. Jojie Lloren and Joan Bitagcol in Pied des Cochon In Paris

PHOTOS: TIM YAP

Hip young Pinoy trotters all over the world

From Hong Kong to New York, Paris, and Ibiza, Pinoys show that the world is all theirs to discover and conquer

Tim Yap

TRAVEL seems to be a trend nowadays among the youth. Too many *despedida* parties are being held left and right for friends leaving, either for leisure or for studies. If the older set is preparing for a diplomatic post abroad as ambassador of this or that country, our set hip-hops around the world to discover more of what the world has to offer.

"I miss the familiarity, but it's this same familiarity that made me decide to leave," said my friend who gave up his fashion editorial job to teach English in Morocco. In his e-mails to me, he would tell me of his amazement of Argentina, and of the beauty of Brazil. Then, he would end with, "Ciao now, have to attend a farewell party for a friend who's going back to India."

Too many people in the scene are actually leaving. Some for career advancement or family, some to heal a wounded heart.

This marketing maven for a liquor company is leaving for Indonesia to join her husband who will become the marketing head of Nike in that part of the world. "I can't sleep without my honey bun beside me."

A junior editor is leaving for New York to further her studies; a young socialite (hate that term) is leaving for San Francisco to study and participate in the family business, as well as to get over a failed relationship.

I know of this one lady who worked for a major department store. She was going to get married, but her fiancé all of a sudden backed out and decided to marry another. She is now in the Big Apple taking her master's. So is another famous and stylish young actress who is trying her luck there. "I know I will make it," she enthuses.

These are just among the stories of our generation. Aside from that, there are also many young Pinoy success stories around the world.

Since this is 2bU!'s travel issue, I decided to put together pictures of hip young Pinoys (HYP) that I've met during my travels around the world this past year. I am a natural Pinoy magnet, wherever I go.

Unmistakably Pinoy

Never would there be a Hong Kong trip that I would not pass by Central and bond with the Pinoy maids having a picnic at the park. My usual trick would be to ask a question, and when I hear the usually obvious Pinoy accent coming, I begin to speak in the native tongue.

To which they would mutter in surprise, "*Akala ko Hapon ka* (I thought you were Japanese)!" Then, they would graciously ask me to join them, or they help me with the directions, even go with me as I do the commute around the city.

Even in Ibiza, Spain, where I didn't expect to see a single Pinoy soul, I met this guy, **Rolly Agustin**, who was manning the hotel reception. He was so nice as to even lend me his car and tour me around the party city. It turned out his sister was married to the owner of the hotel, so I ended up getting a huge discount!

In New York, I stayed with **Ronnie Alejandro**, chef, publisher and dancer extraordinaire. In his place are hordes and hordes of photos and files of what he calls "Pinoyorkers." There, aside from **Lea Salonga**, **Josie Natori**, **Anna Bayle** and **Rafe Totengco**, another Filipino shines bright in the fashion scene.

Stephen Gan, the man behind Visionaire magazine (hailed as "the most exclusive fashion magazine in the world," its latest, the Fendi issue, retails for $350 apiece) is the toast of New York's cutting-edge visual scene. He now has V magazine, Visionaire's sister publication, also making waves in the style scene. Model **Stacey Brennan** now works with Hermes. **Denden Abesamis** now works with Armani. **Farrah Carbonel** used to do Versace.

Arabella Rufino, younger sister of ballet diva **Maritoni Rufino**, heads the PR division of Gucci in New York. She reports directly to **Tom Ford** and, according to close friend **Tina Tinio**, "Tom Ford absolutely adores her."

When I was in London, even the Filipinos living there recognized **Joyce Jimenez**, on a vacation with close buddy **Mar G Ocampo**. **G Toengi**, whom I was with in New York for Halloween, was being hounded for pictures on the street. **Ruffa Gutierrez** is another character: She can write a book with her travels around the world alone as subject.

The next Bayle

As I was writing this article, I was receiving texts from model **Pia Rivera**, also popularly known as the "next Anna Bayle," and as the girl who made local fashion show directors proud when they saw her sashaying for a Milanese designer on Fashion TV. She is now studying art in Firenze, Italy.

Jojie Lloren, whom I visited in Paris, is now at the top of his class in fashion design in one of France's most exclusive style schools. **Joan Bitagcol**, über model, is now there as well doing the rounds of castings.

I remember last summer when we were all there, sitting in an outdoor café in Paris, people-watching. "That's the **Sharon Cuneta** of Paris," Jojie said as we played spot-the-look-alikes. "Then, there's the **Myrza Sison** of Paris," he pointed to another, "Ah, no—that's the **Tina Maristela** of Paris." When I looked, it *was* Tina Maristela-Ocampo, walking the streets with husband **Ricco** and their kids.

A lot of times, I would just bump into a Tagalog-speaking person in a theater, while shopping or dining at a restaurant. Immediately, that bond ignites and I'd see myself spending the afternoon or evening talking to that person.

There are still so many travel stories—of laughter, yearning, success and failure—all waiting to be told. Not surprising since we are a nation full of migrant students and workers—from corporate executives, theater performers, design, fashion and culinary art students, white- and blue-collar workers, the hip young Pinoy is, indeed, all over the world.

Via text from a friend studying in Italy, this message comes to mind, "Remember, you have the fire that others desire."

May all of us who travel this road find what we are looking for.

Godspeed.

MODEL BEHAVIOR. Joan Bitagcol and a Singaporean model friend in Les Halles, Paris

AT CHEZ Es Saada on 1st Street, New York. Best buddies Jonjon Rufino and Mike Chan with Leo Deocampo and Bloomberg reporter Yvette Fernandez

SPOTTED IN VEGAS. Designer Louie Mamengo at the Las Vegas Convention Center

CHEERS FROM BLIGHTY! Gilbert and Geraldine Pangilinan, Mar G Ocampo and Joyce Jimenez

SEEN at the preview of West End's "Witches of Eastwick" are Marissa and Choy Lagdameo with Anna Buenaventura.

"MISS Saigon" London's Dennis Astorga, now based in Paris

PAUL Oakenfold's agent, Maria Hunt, once lived in the Philippines with her *lola*. She is now based in London.

MONINA Villaroman, former newscaster, spotted in a London street with her fiancé

AT THE BIG Apple's hip meat-packing district are Marty Atienza, Stacey Brennan and Mark Punzalan.

HONG KONG HOPPING. Illan, Natasha Goulbourn, Kris Yang, Pia Echauz and Katrina Goulbourn

AT THE MARAIS DISTRICT, PARIS. Designer Vic Barba and friend Christian

Learn how to sing the iO way

"SCHOOL is a bore." Not anymore! Think of a school that uses high-class, technically sophisticated entertainment establishments as its classrooms. Imagine having your lessons aided by the state-of-the-art audiovisual equipment—widescreen TVs, a computerized song selection library of over 20,000 titles, Shure microphones, subwoofers and the like. Picture yourself learning in a cool and cozy room that has garnered two international awards for international design. Add to that the ready availability of a wide menu of mouth-watering food and drinks delivered straight to your classroom. Now, doesn't that sound like fun?

Yes, that school exists. iO KTV, Makati's finest karaoke establishment has founded the iO School of Music utilizing its stylish rooms as classrooms. Since they already offer music lovers one of the finest services around town, they decided to boost their musical services by helping people learn how to sing beautifully.

With such highly qualified teachers you can be assured of competent musical instruction. Though they may be musical heavyweights, you need not feel intimidated. Classes are highly personalized and are designed to cater to each person's specific needs. One teacher per student! So even if you are the shy type, you need not worry as only your teacher will watch you learn to stretch your vocal chords. The courses are nonformal, so you don't have to worry about grades. The only thing that matters is that you learn and have fun doing it.

The courses consist of a 12 session personalized program. Training will focus on proper techniques for singing including efficient breath control and vocalization. Training will also consist of coaching in terms of song interpretation and performing before an audience. Though the school's thrust is in the art of singing, it also offers lessons in piano and other musical instruments.

Each session lasts for 30 minutes and costs an affordable P350.00 per session or a total of P4,200 for the course. Classes are offered on Mondays and Wednesdays, 4- 8 p.m. and on Saturdays, 1-8 p.m. iO Family KTV and the iO School of Music are located on the 3/F and 4/F of Jupiter Place Building, Jupiter Street, Makati City. Call 895-5940 to -41.

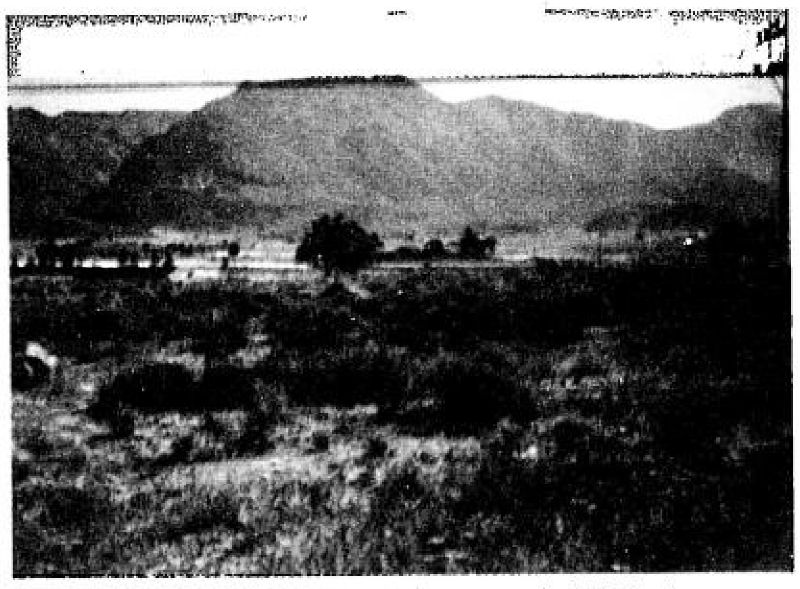
Going back to school is now in style! So if you want to sing beautifully and have fun at the same time, the iO School of Music is waiting!

PROF. Andrea Veneracion of Philippine Madrigal Singers, Beegee Gonzalez, iO Family KTV president, and Bianca Araneta

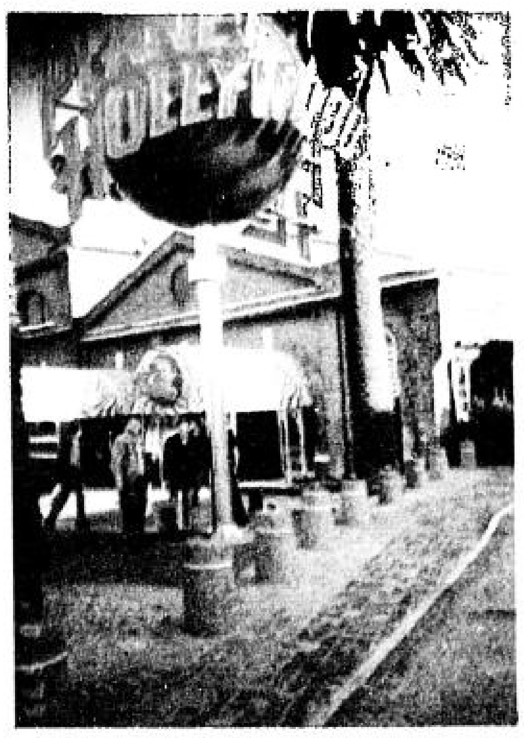
CAMILLE Cruz and Edwin Reyes, iO Family KTV general manager

THE AUTHOR (extreme left) enjoying the sights in South Africa

Desert, animals, scorching heat, African natives with almost nothing on—South Africa is, in fact, the exact opposite



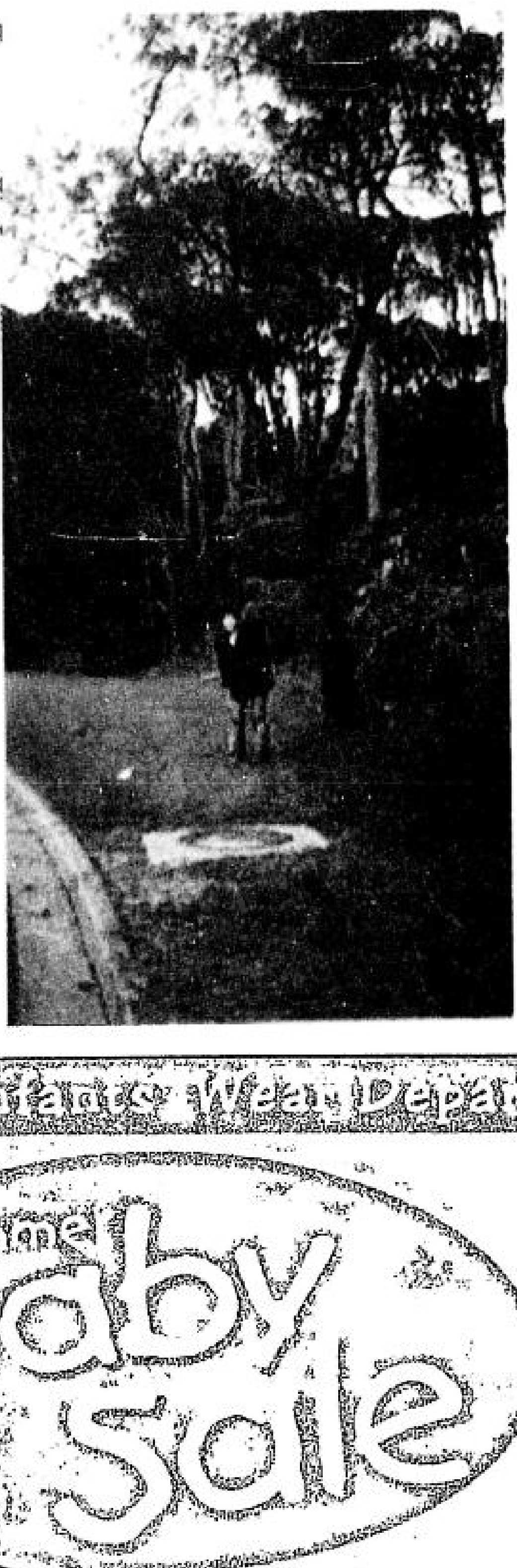
IN SOUTH Africa, cars travel at a minimum speed of 150 km/hour.



NOT UNCIVILIZED. Planet Hollywood's Africa outlet

A different South Africa

BY TESA ARCILLA
2bU! Correspondent



FOR US Filipinos who regularly travel abroad during the summer break, we have the tendency to fly to all corners of the United States and practically invade the country. The most common destinations are California and New York. Although there are some who venture off to Europe, Australia and the rest of Asia, the US is still the favorite vacation destination of Filipinos.

However, have any of you ever thought of going to the continent we tend to take for granted? Have you ever thought of going to Africa?

Preconceived notions

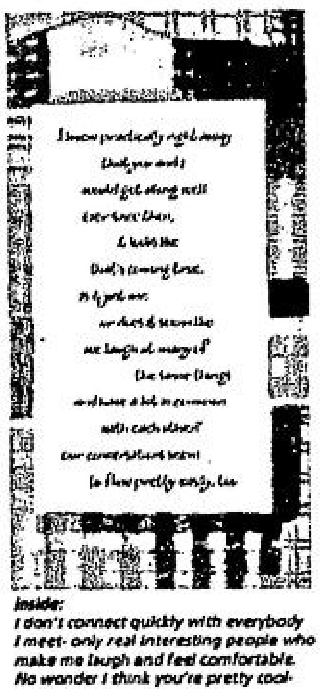
Think Africa and what are the first things that enter your mind? Desert, animals, scorching heat, African natives with almost nothing on. I thought so, because that was precisely what I was expecting to see when I was preparing for my trip to South Africa. But preconceived notions are precisely just that—preconceptions and, in this case, they were misconceptions.

South Africa is, in fact, the exact opposite. Majority of the people I saw in the streets were not the black natives I pictured, but Caucasian professionals. The temperature ranged from -12 to 10°C, and it was a better version of Los Angeles and New York put together.

Interesting facts about South Africa

- They have a strange fascination with Asians, especially Filipinos, and they know so much about our country.
- You can say "hi" to everyone you meet on the streets regardless of whether they are also tourists or locals.
- Ostriches can be ridden like horses and they can scare the hell out of you.
- South Africans seem to be more Catholic than we are because during Mass, they actually nod with the priest and answer his questions! They also line up for communion row by row!
- After Mass, all young people are invited to a small party beside the church so they can get to know one another.
- The royal family spends their holiday vacations at the rest houses located in Port Elizabeth.
- The cars people drive don't go cheaper than a Benz (and we thought they only had camels and what not)!
- They have Planet Hollywood. (Yes, this was a surprise!)
- The Sun City, where Miss World pageants are held, is simply breathtaking!

These are only a few of the interesting facts I wouldn't have known had I not visited South Africa. The US is an overrated vacation destination and South Africa is the perfect new place for Filipinos to visit. So, this summer, try to control yourself from invading California and visit South Africa for a change!



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I don't connect quickly with everybody I meet- only real interesting people who make me laugh and feel comfortable. No wonder I think you're pretty cool- you've got all that going for you plus a whole lot more!

The Between You and Me "Cardspeak" Contest!

Watch out for it on the Philippine Daily Inquirer's 2bU! section starting March 28!

Have you ever received a **Hallmark Between You and Me** card that changed your life forever? Okay, probably not THAT life altering but something that made you really happy that you just had to shout it from the rooftops or something that touched you so much that you couldn't stop the tears from welling in your eyes. Well, here's your chance! Send us the most memorable Between You & Me card you received (actual card) and tell us why it means so much to you in 200 words or less. One lucky winner will win two cool **Swatch** watches per week! (One for you and one for the person who sent you the card). Mail your entries to Filstar Distributors Corporation 3/F Team Pacific Bldg. 13 Jose Cruz St. Ugong, Pasig City 1604. Please include your name, address & contact number. **2bU!** & **Hallmark** will not be responsible for lost, misdirected or late entries. All unclaimed entries will become the property of Filstar. Winners may claim their prizes at the Filstar office. Contest starts on March 28 and ends on May 16, 2001. Catch Joe D'Mango's Love Notes every Friday (10:00 am) at **WAVE 89.1** as he reads your favorite Between You & Me cards and every Sunday in **Inquirer**'s Lifestyle section.

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It is with great pride and pleasure that I convey my warmest felicitations to **Smart Communications, Inc.**

I wish to congratulate your company for having won the "Most Innovative GSM Wireless Services for Customers" Award in the recently concluded Congress of the GSM Association in Cannes, France. This award and recognition for your innovative service product called "Smart Money" is an achievement not only for Smart but for the entire local telecommunications industry. It shows that Philippine companies can make their indelible mark in the highly competitive field of international telecommunications.

I commend the efforts of your company in establishing the Philippines as one of Asia's pioneers in the field of telecommunications. The cutting edge technology and Filipino ingenuity reflected in your Smart Money product prove once more that our wireless services are at par with the leading nations of the world. This milestone underscores the opportunity our country has in establishing a strategic niche in the complex field of telecommunications.

With the rapid pace of development in technology, I urge Smart Communications, Inc. to do its share in nation building by continuing to be a potent force in the telecommunications industry. I hope the new administration can count on your initiatives in providing a more prosperous and progressive society for the Filipino people.

Congratulations and MABUHAY!

GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
President
Republic of the Philippines

My warmest congratulations to Smart Communications, Inc., for winning the "Most Innovative GSM Wireless Service for Customers Award" in the GSM World Congress in Cannes, France.

The recognition given to Smart for its entry, ***Smart Money***, is indeed significant as it acknowledged the Filipinos among the world's leading technological innovators in wireless services.

In this regard, the Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC) hopes that Smart Communications, Inc. will continue to develop services that would not only bring satisfaction to its subscribers but also bring pride and recognition to the Filipino ingenuity.

Mabuhay!

PANTALEON D. ALVAREZ
Secretary
Department of Transportation and Communication

Our warmest greetings and sincerest congratulations to the dynamic men and women of **Smart Communications, Inc.** for winning the ***"Most Innovative GSM Wireless Service for Customers"* Award** at the recent GSM World Congress in Cannes, France.

It is truly heartening to note that Smart earned this distinction for ***"Smart Money"*** – which, we understand, is **the world's first reloadable cash card linked to a mobile phone service.**

This recognition highlights what Philippine companies can achieve in the rapidly developing fields of mobile communications and wireless services. It underscores the potential benefits that the country can enjoy if we aggressively harness the skills and expertise of our people in information technology and telecommunications.

Indeed, as the digital economy becomes even more pronounced, the application of cutting edge IT and telecommunications technologies and innovations into our local business operations becomes even more vital if we are to fortify their linkages with the global information network and maximize their impact on our bid for global competitiveness.

To the management and staff of **Smart Communications, Inc.**, our best wishes for continuing success!

Mabuhay! All the best and congratulations!

MAR ROXAS
Secretary
Department of Trade and Industry

We at the National Telecommunications Commission congratulate Smart Communications, Inc., for winning the prestigious GSM Association Awards 2001 in the Most Innovative GSM Wireless Service for Customers Category with its electronic cash card, SMART Money.

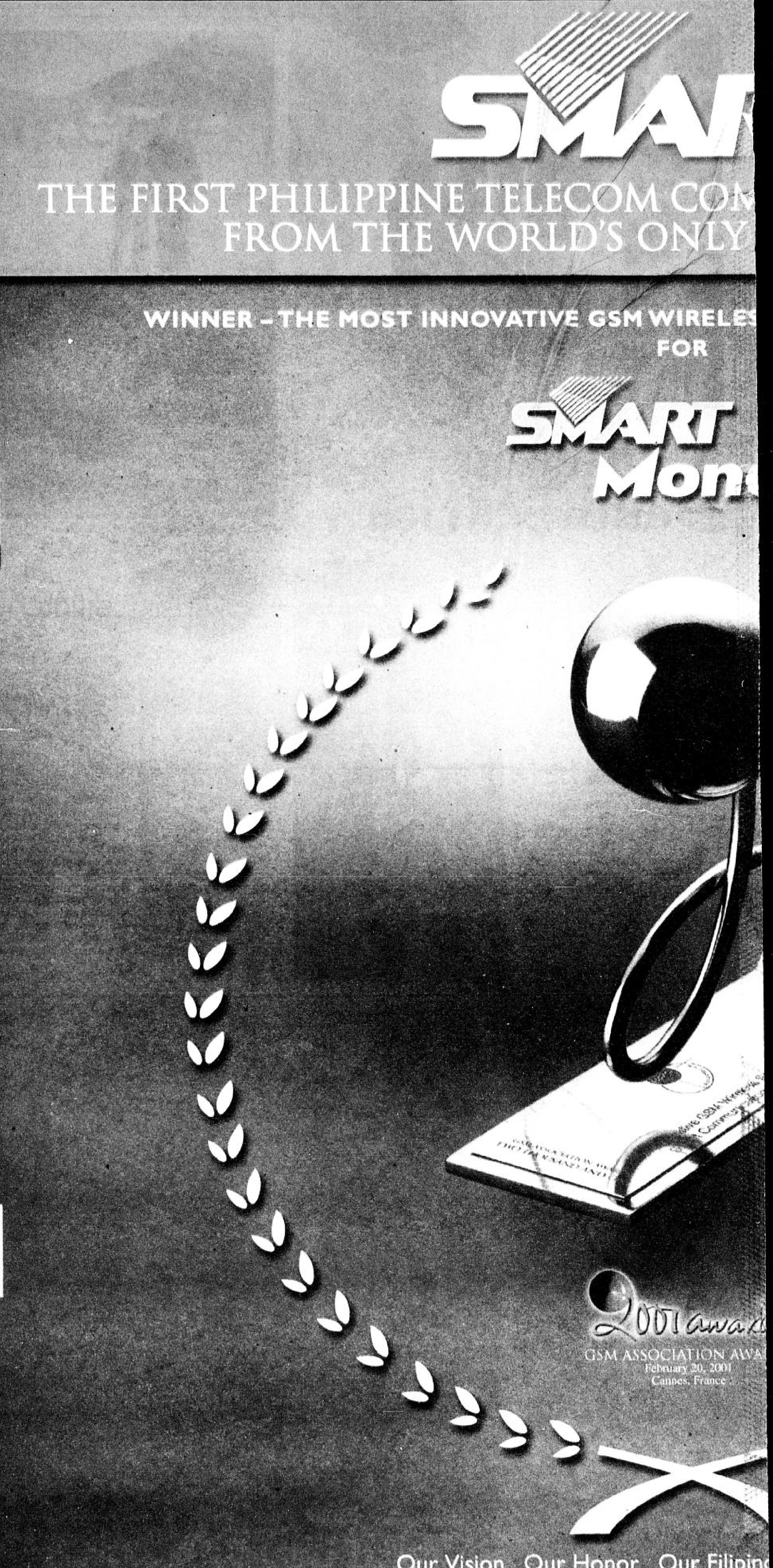
In its sixth year, the GSM Awards is considered as a tribute to the achievers that continue to lead the development of the GSM family of technologies.

We are proud that Smart Money has gained recognition from the international telecommunications industry. This wireless service, the first e-cash card linked to a mobile phone is a Filipino original. It integrates cutting edge global technology with Filipino ingenuity proving once more that our wireless services are at par with the leading nations of the world.

With the rapid pace of development of technology and the huge social responsibilities that accompany such changes, may Smart's creativity and innovation for the benefits of the consumers serve as an inspiration for all of us.

Very respectfully yours,

B. Gen. ELISEO M. RIO Jr.
Commissioner
National Telecommunications Commission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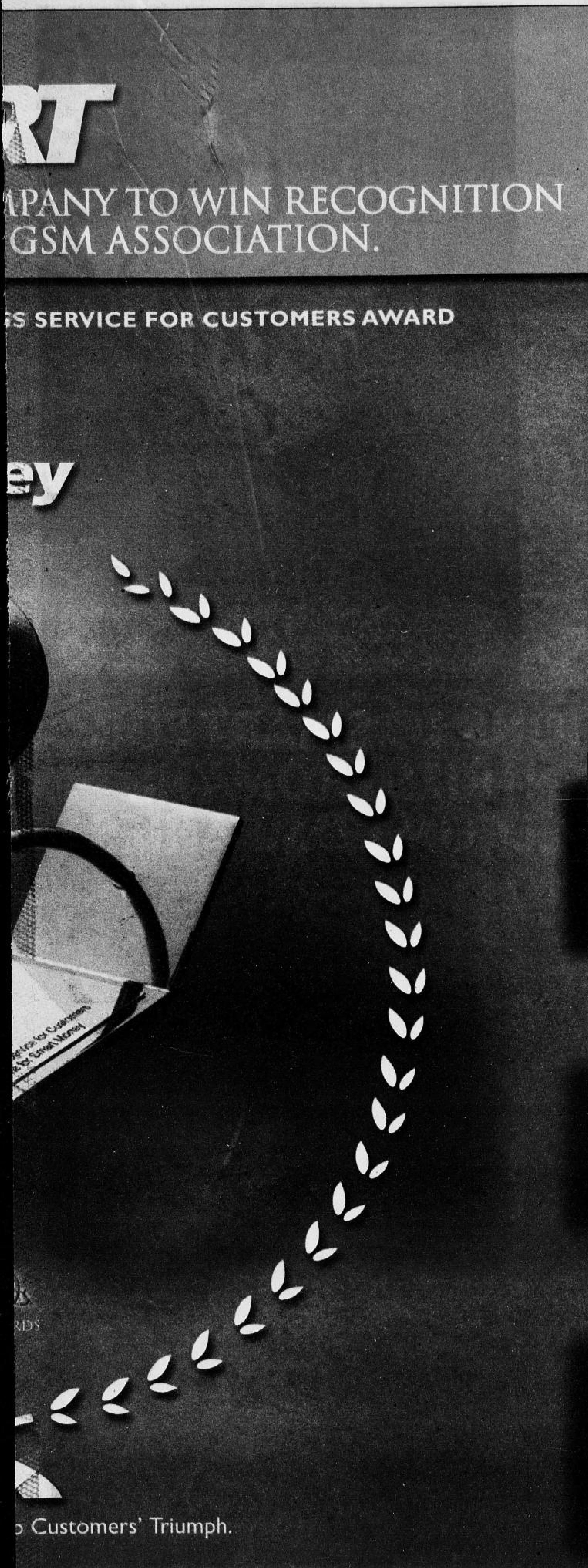


It Started With A Vision…

SMART: cited as one of the top 10 leading Philippine companies by the Far Eastern Economic Review in 1998 and 2000.

From the beginning, SMART Communications' management, partners and shareholders had a vision of making the company a world-class provider of innovative cellular services.

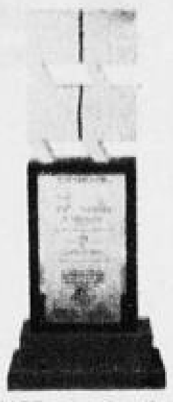
The vision is becoming a reality. In 1998 and 2000, The Far Eastern Economic Review, one of Asia's leading business magazines, cited SMART as one of the top 10 leading Philippine companies. Readers were asked to rank local and multinational companies based on overall leadership, service and product quality, long term vision, innovative response to customer needs and financial soundness.

EUROMONEY

SMART: ranked 4th in Euromoney's survey on best Asian telecom companies in 2000.

Leading financial magazine Euromoney has also recognized SMART Communications as one of Asia's best-managed cellular telecommunications companies for the year 2000.

Coming in fourth in Euromoney's annual survey, SMART was given high marks by market analysts from major banks and research institutes worldwide. Respondents were asked to nominate the top companies in each of the countries and sectors they covered. Factors they considered were market strength, profitability, growth potential and the quality of management and earnings.



SMART: named as the 1997 Marketing Company Of The Year by the Agora Awards.

Even as early as 1997, SMART received the country's highest and most coveted award for marketing excellence: "Marketing Company of the Year" in the Agora Awards of the Philippine Marketing Association. It bested several leading companies, even multinational corporations across industries.

...Then Came Worldwide Recognition

SMART proved that it was at par with the world's best when it scored a major victory at the 2001 GSM Association Awards of the World GSM Congress in Cannes, France – the GSM community's version of the Olympics. Given annually, the World GSM Awards cites telecommunications companies for their excellent and innovative GSM products and services.

This year, companies from all over the world competed for the coveted awards for technical and commercial innovations. The GSM Association received a record number of 360 entries. The judging panel was faced with the difficult task of selecting from a long list of outstanding new initiatives and pioneering products and services. With the SMART Money Service as an entry to the GSM Awards, SMART received the Most Innovative GSM Wireless Service for Customers Award, besting numerous entries from other top telecom companies from Europe, America and Asia.

But despite the victory, the work is far from finished – there are still many dreams to be fulfilled in the years to come. The global recognition has provided SMART not only with the realization of a vision, but also the inspiration to continue providing world-class services that will change the way people live forever.

Napoleon L. Nazareno (right), SMART President & CEO shown accepting the GSM award from Rob Conway, CEO of the GSM Association

The World-Class, Award-Winning Service: SMART Money

SMART Money MasterCard Electronic is the product of the combined expertise of SMART Communications, the widest wireless digital network, and MasterCard, the world's leading global payments service provider. SMART Money is the first and only reloadable cash card linked to a mobile phone. It allows you to reload your own SMART pre-paid account or someone else's completely over-the-air. This can be valuable to parents who want to load their children's Buddy celfones. With SMART Money, you will never have to be afraid of running out of cash on hand since you can use it to purchase everyday necessities such as food, medicine and gas from all MasterCard Electronic and SMART Money-affiliated establishments nationwide. You can even buy from stores that don't normally accept credit cards such as bazaars, *tiangges*, and cinemas.

MasterCard Electronic

The SMART Management Team

You can also order and pay for goods and services such as movie tickets, food and flowers without even going to the store and have them delivered anywhere. Parents can use this feature to have food delivered to their kids at home, or by anyone who wants to have flowers delivered. What's more, you can even transfer value from one SMART Money card to another, for example, parents can load cash credit into their children's SMART Money cash cards.

SMART Money was launched last December 18, 2000. To date, thousands have availed of the service.

SMART
Money

SMART-MONEY: A world-class innovation

SMART Money cash cards come free with every purchase of a SMART Money/MBS SIM Pack. Cash value can be loaded in the SMART Money card account either through SMART Mobile Banking Solution or over the counter at accredited loading centers.

SMART Money

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payment service innovation.

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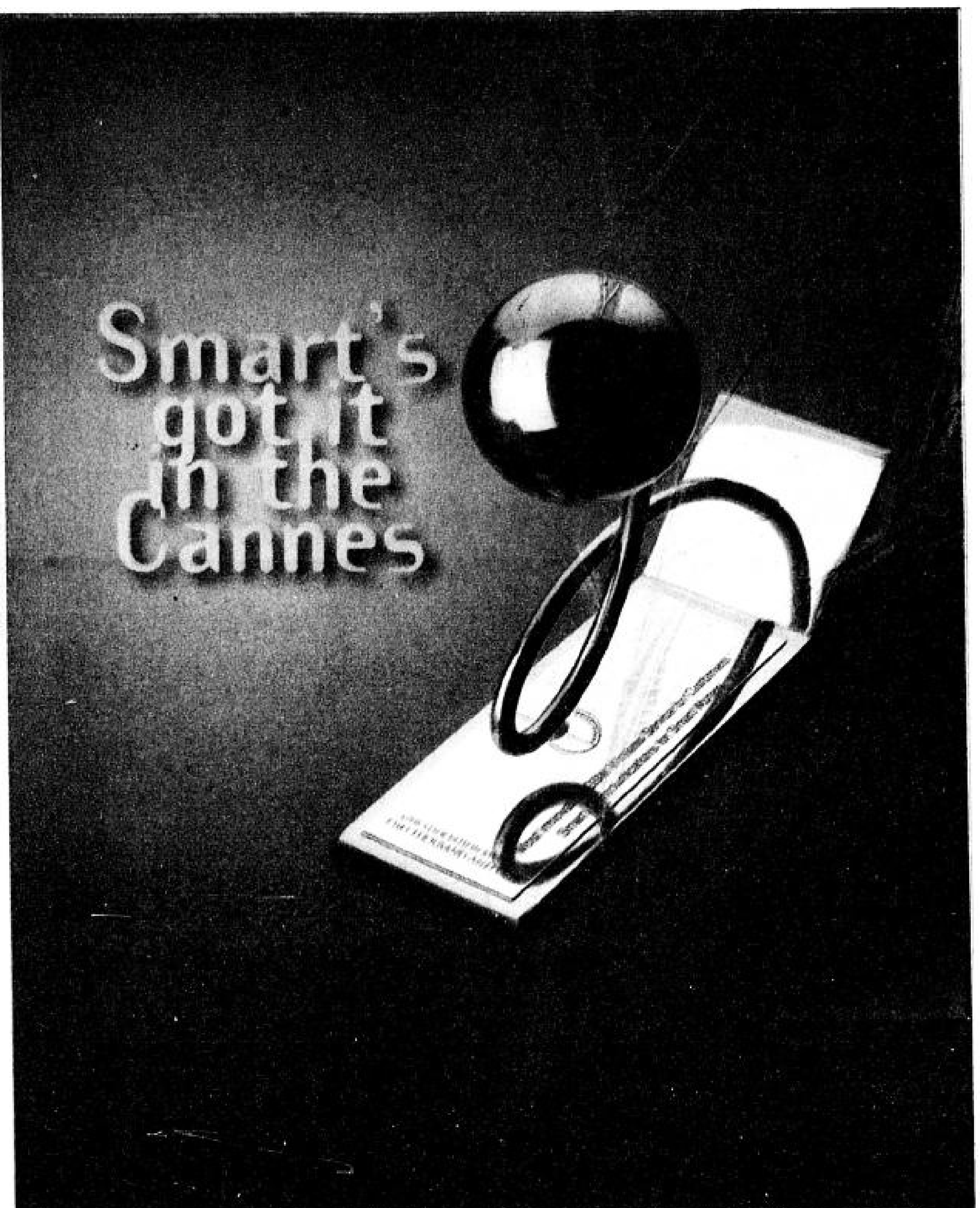
in bringing the technology of the future
to the Philippines
and the rest of the world.



Zed, the leading global mobile portal, congratulates Smart Communications, Inc., the country's leading cellular operator, for winning in the recently concluded 2001 GSM Association Awards in Cannes, France. Their **"Smart Money"** electronic reloadable cash card service was cited for being the Most Innovative GSM Wireless Service for Customers. It just proves that when you're Smart, you always win.

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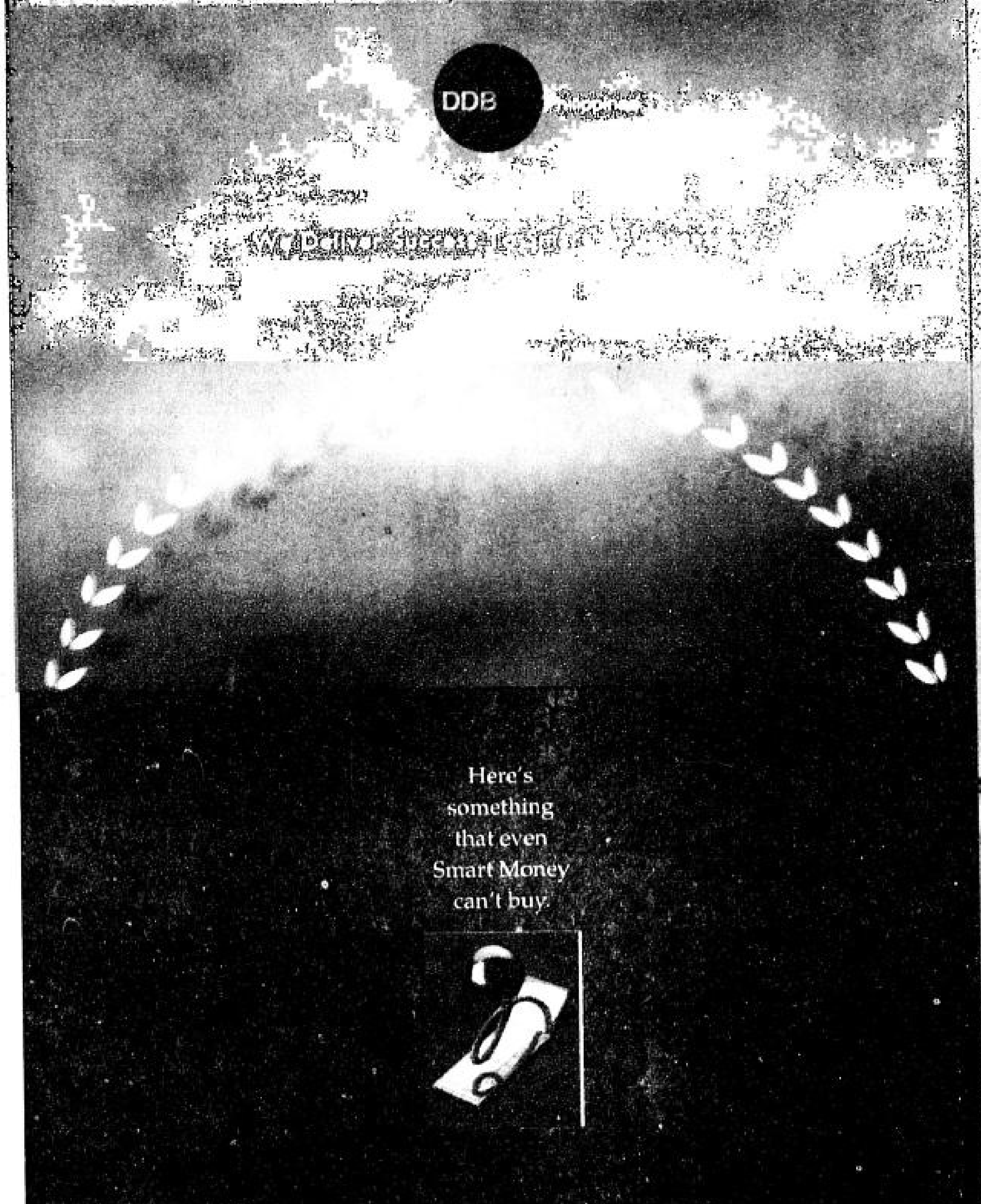
CONGRATULATIONS TO SMART FOR BESTING 360 ENTRIES FROM THE WORLD'S TOP TELECOM COMPANIES.



Here's
something
that even
Smart Money
can't buy.

Smart Communications, Inc. just bagged a trophy in the recent 2001 GSM Association Awards in Cannes, France. Their Smart Money electronic reloadable cash card service was voted as the Most Innovative GSM Wireless Service for Customers. To the judges we say, good call!

CONGRATULATIONS FROM ACE SAATCHI & SAATCHI

NOKIA
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Smart celebration
SMART

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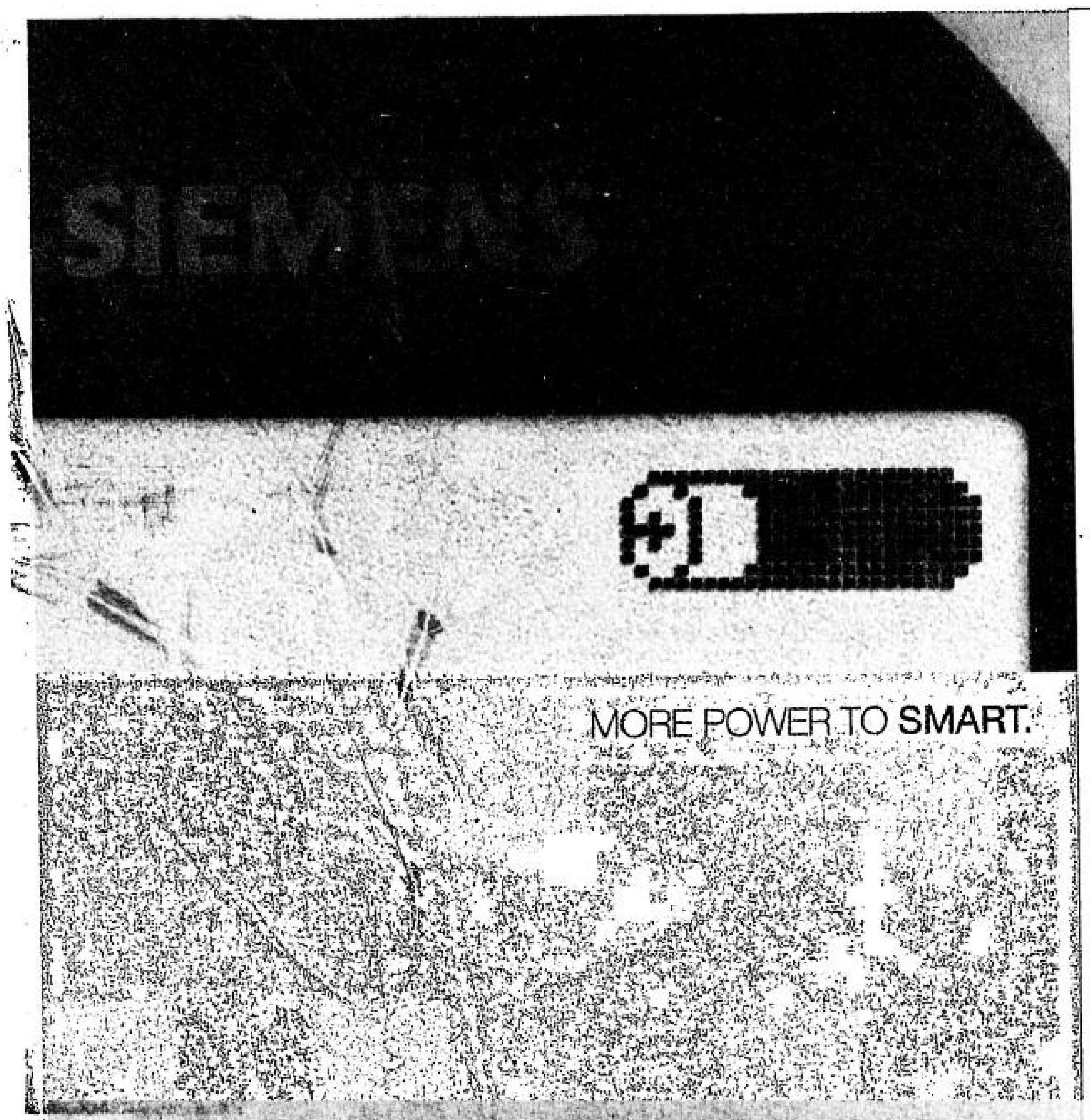
Nokia congratulates Smart Communications, Inc. for winning the Most Innovative GSM Wireless Service for Customers Award for Smart Money at the 2001 GSM Association Awards in Cannes, France.



MORE POWER TO SMART.

Congratulations to SMART Communications, Inc. for winning the prestigious "Most Innovative GSM Wireless Service for Customers" award for SMART Money at the 2001 GSM Association Awards, Cannes, France.

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We, the Management and Staff of Alcatel,

extend our sincerest congratulations to

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for garnering the

Most Innovative GSM Wireless Service

For Customers Award

at the 2001 GSM Association Awards

in Cannes, France.

ALCATEL
ARCHITECTS OF AN INTERNET WORLD

WEBSITE OF THE WEEK

Are we there yet?

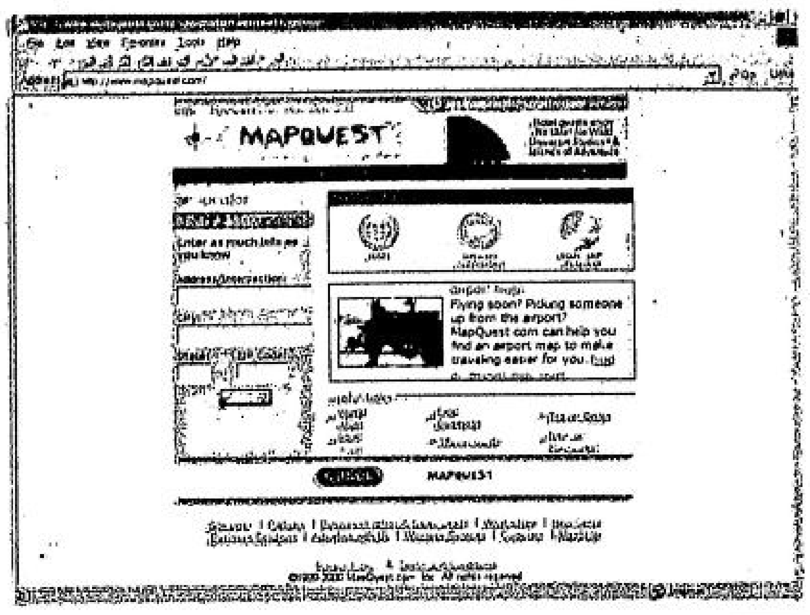
By WALTER ANG

SUMMER is here! And everyone can't wait for school to end (or for office breaks to start) so they can go on out-of-town trips!

2bU! has wanted to feature a local travel website but it takes ages to download. We've noticed that some local sites have slow servers which really discourage visits. Local webmasters, take note!

Since we couldn't even get to see the local site, we decided to check out mapquest.com. As the site's tagline states, once you decide where to go, you'll have to find out how to get there.

For the fabulously wealthy, traveling by air or by water is no problem. For the rest, however, traveling by car is the only way to go. Free spirits can certainly appreciate the long stretches of roads and the winds blowing in their faces. But before your carmates start chanting "Are we there yet? Are we there yet?" better figure out the shortest and most accurate way to get there first!


MAPQUEST
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Flying soon? Picking someone up from the airport? MapQuest.com can help you find an airport map to make traveling easier for you.
MAPQUEST

Mapquest provides maps of addresses that you type in. Although it only has North America and Europe in its database, it's pretty nifty! I typed in the address of my aunt who lives in California and the site dished out a pretty good map. A bright red star marked the spot.

Apart from providing a map, it even gives driving directions to and from the address that you'd choose. Other useful features include the availability of airport maps and road trip planners.

This site can be a great tool for people planning to travel to the US or Europe this summer, especially for hardy travelers who eschew group tours and would rather plan their own itineraries. Business travelers can take advantage of airport maps to save time. Exchange students can get an idea of the town or city where they'll be placed before they even get there.

So surf on this site and map out your destination before you step on the gas. Happy traveling!

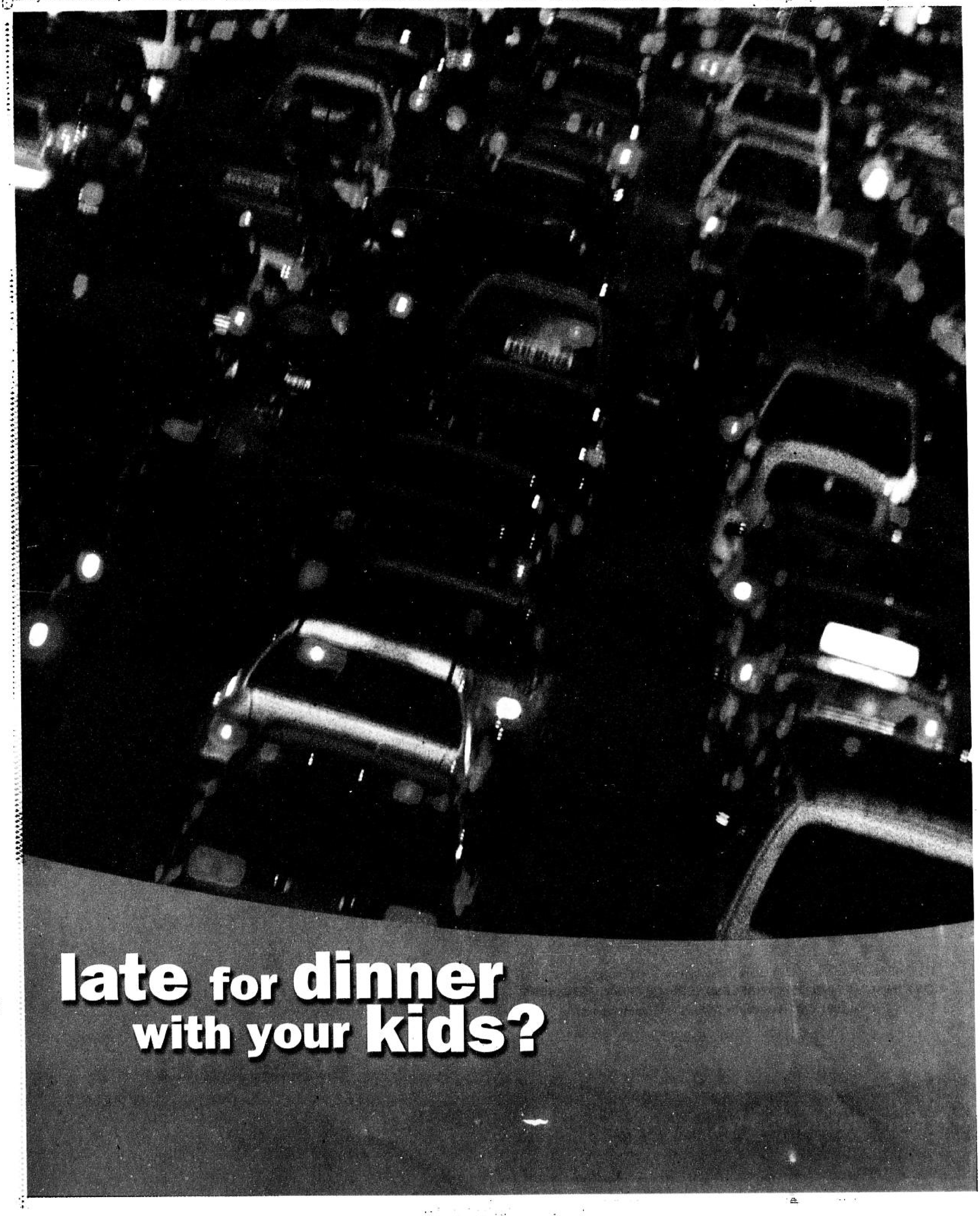
Watch 'Disney Buzz' to win posters of music celebs

THE DISNEY Channel is giving away an exclusive poster from the UK autographed by today's hottest music celebrities via an ongoing contest called "The Great 8 Competition."

By tuning in to "Disney Buzz" every Saturday at 4 p.m. and Sunday at 8:30 a.m., Disney fans stand a chance to win this priceless poster autographed by music hotties Point Break, Lolly, Atomic Kitten, Westlife, Girl Thing, Emily Hart, Al and S Club 7. All they have to do is stay glued on the program to find out how to win this one-of-a-kind prize. Besides the multi-autographed poster, "Disney Buzz" presenters Jien and Azura will deliver the goods to the winning Disney enthusiast in person!

And not only that, exclusive interviews with these chartbusters will be aired once a week for eight weeks on the "Disney Buzz."

The "Disney Buzz" is hosted by Jien and Azura. Aired every weekend, it is a fun show where viewers can catch different Disney shows.



The trip to bountiful—bountiful boredom that is

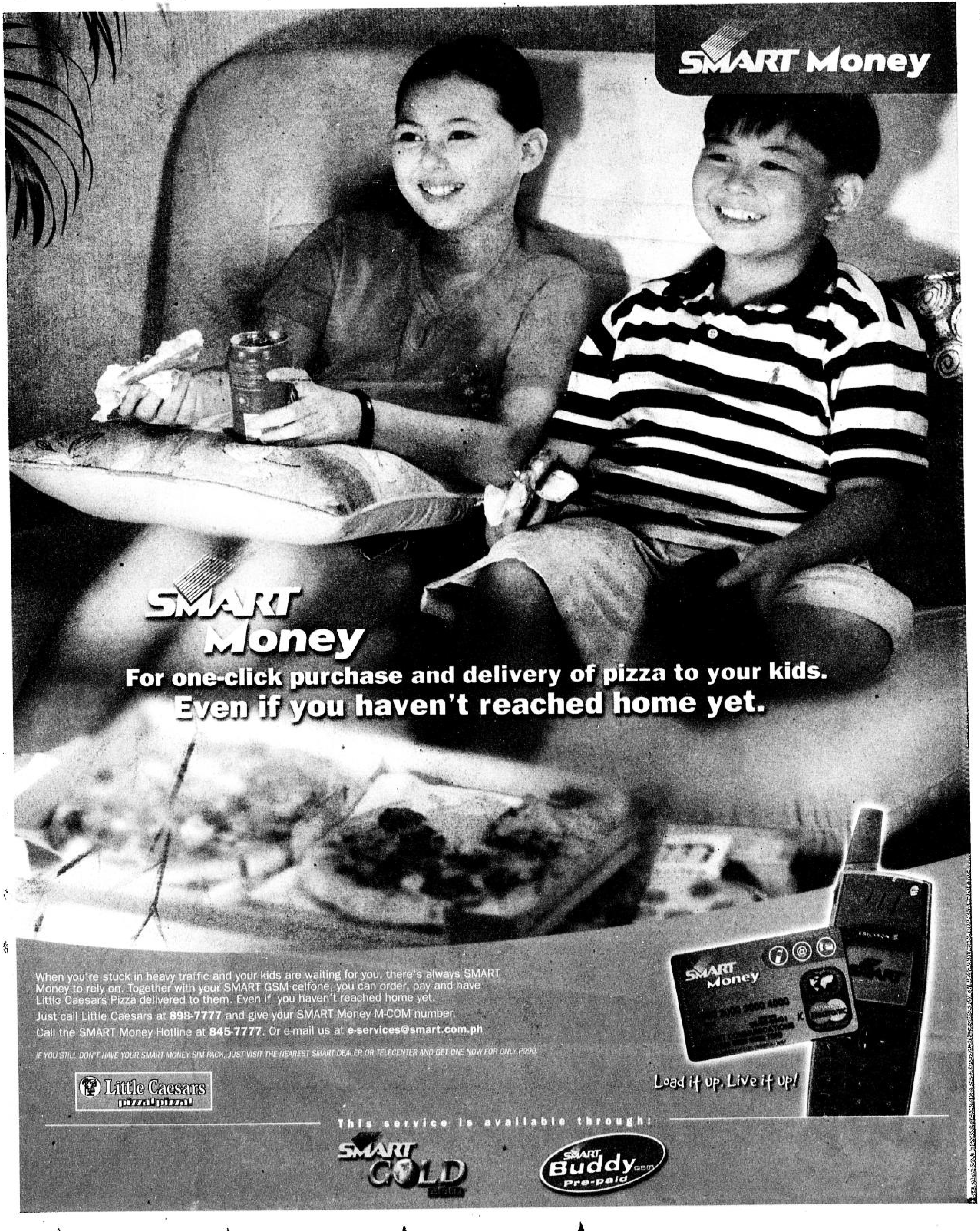
(From page D12)

made a sign that said, "He wants your phone number!" and plastered it on the window. Just one of those ways to amuse yourself by looking stupid.

Chronicle with a cassette. My friends and I cannot get over the recordings I made during our junior high school trip. Armed with a cassette recorder, I interviewed most of my classmates and had them sing silly songs, rant over our teachers, answer senseless questions and impart "inspiring" quotations. It's really a better—and amusing—way to get to know your friends (or in this case, classmates) better. You could ambush interview someone, then review and laugh over it later. You would realize how much you suck. Try spoofing Mikey Enriquez and describe the sights as you go by, and you'd find it so idiotic and funny at the same time. Even the recordings I made of the teacher scolding someone in class provided comic relief while traveling. With the funny things you'll be doing on your trip this year, you'll have something to listen to on the next. All these you can do while on the move.

Dig out those skeletons. Mwa-haha... finally, you've got them cornered! There is no escape. The truth is out. Isn't it fun when you finally get that chance to ask your friend about his girlfriend who dumped him for a girl who used to be his crush in high school? Yes, there is always something like that in your *barkada*, and being stuck in a car in the middle of nowhere is the perfect opportunity to learn their deepest, darkest secrets. But then again, who knows what you yourself are hiding, so go easy with the questioning.

Know the game. Of course, one just has to include games on lists like this. From card to memory games, one can select the most appropriate ones for his/her friends' tastes. You still don't know what games you can play on your nice little trip? Here's an idea: Each player must pick out a battle name. Write the names down on a piece of paper then set aside. Then divide into two teams. Designate a team leader who'd be responsible for your team strategy. When all is set, begin timer. First one to make a sound will be voted off the car. Then listen to your designated driver sigh with relief.



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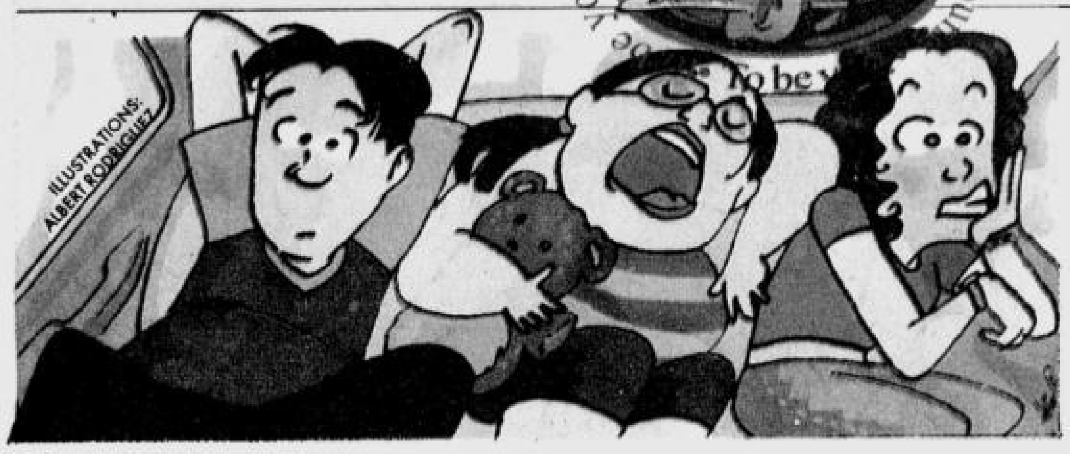

ILLUSTRATIONS: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

The trip to bountiful—bountiful boredom that is

A vacation means out-of-town trips. Here are nine tips to ease the monotony of long travels

By Harold Jason L. Doplito
2bU! Correspondent

YOU can finally smell it—vacation fever is in the air. Finally, that much-awaited road trip would soon materialize. Imagine a long strip of road with no traffic, your car running smooth on the highway as you listen to your favorite record in full volume. The morning sunshine firing up everything with its energy. The wind blowing in your hair...

But wait. Reality check: we're in the Philippines where highways are unpredictable. You'd have to spend a good two to three hours on the road before you could reach your desired destination. It gets to a point you'd rather go farther away so you could take a ferry or a plane just to avoid the nightmarish car build-up. If you're lucky, however, and your car is miraculously going fast, then there's still something that we all have to address: the problem of boredom. Sometimes, singing to your favorite song just isn't fun anymore and so here are tips to get through travelling without being bored:

Keep 'em rollin'. Some people just have it. When it comes to traveling, some people have the ability to follow something with their eyes without getting a splitting headache. Like being able to read "Unbearable Lightness of Being" on the road, which could be a double whammy for a light reader like me. Or cross-stitching on a forsaken windy highway with the car's minimum lighting. Our 2bU! chief of correspondents has the ability to make those tiny beaded bracelets while in a moving cab. If you don't have these talents, bring a nice book, your latest hobby and some paracetamol just in case.

Make your walkie do some talking. Horror story: You haven't bought a tape in the last six months. You're tired of listening to your old albums. You didn't take any of them on your trip. You brought your Walkman.

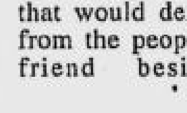
While on the bus, you whip out your Walkman and try to find a decent FM station. No signal. You gasp! You choke! You're bored to death!

Okay, it's an exaggerated, insipid horror story, but it kept you in suspense, right? Come on, admit it. Audio books could just be your cup of tea. Basically, they're books read out loud and recorded for you, so you won't get that splitting headache I mentioned earlier. From "Star Wars" to Stephen King thrillers, there a quite a number of titles to choose from. Just avoid stories with vehicular mishaps in them for a more comfortable ride.

Snap with a click. So you're a budding photographer? Then this road trip may just be the next project you need. A video camera is not necessarily the only item that can chronicle your traveling experiences. All you need are two to five rolls of film and you're all set. Start taking pictures even before you get in the car or bus. Catch your friends yawning, moaning and drooling while sleeping. Capture everything that surrounds you—the traffic, accidents, crossing animals, highway sidestands and ordinary folks. The right eye may be all that's needed to make these images beautiful. Nature and your friends shouldn't be the only subjects of your photographs.

Extend insomniac hours. How about not sleeping the night before your trip? Yup, it sounds so simple, it's stupid. But believe me, that's how I will fight boredom when my 10-hour trip up north pushes through. Come to think of it, dreaming is worth spending your time on. Aside from the chance that you'll get a good one, arriving relaxed at your destination, is really a major plus. This is worth considering especially if you're traveling alone, or stuck with dull companions. Then, the perfect snooze pillow and your most comfortable position are all that you'll ever need.

Chat by your lonesome. Speaking of all you'll ever need, the ever reliable mobile phone would also be perfect for the solitary voyager. Network companies have devised another profitable scheme where lonely souls can hook up with other individuals to text about everything under the sun. It's different from the anonymous Internet chatrooms, though of course, there are quite a number of limitations to mobile chatting. Who knows, you may encounter someone who lives in the place you're going to? Consider this, though, it's cheaper to stick to texting. You may see yourself reloading so much credit into your cell phone with mobile chat. For more instructions on this topic, visit your service provider's website.



Flash and see them blush. You've seen it on "Romy and Michele" and "Dude, Where's My Car"? You've seen it in most Hollywood films. How about seeing it for yourself? I'm talking about making faces, sticking out your tongue, practically anything that would derive attention and a reaction from the people in other cars. One time, a friend beside the driver's seat

THE TRIP/ p.D11

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NEW York forever... or Disneyworld.—**Quark Henares, 20**

MILAN, St. Tropez, Amanpulo, The Italian Riviera with Tammy and Cher.—**Kris, 17**

Your dream destination

Summer is the time to go places or to dream

BY JAYVI ARUTA
2bU! Correspondent
University of the Philippines

SUMMER'S almost here. You can turn up your nose and practically smell it. Mountain trees and fog, fresh country air, ocean spray—and not just from your bathroom deodorizer either. Sure you should be studying for your final exams. Sure you should be rushing to finish all your projects. But it's happening more often—you find yourself in a dreamy stupor, thinking about all the fun you'll have when all the stuff you still have to do is over and done with.

Where is it going to be? It may be a far-off vista in Europe (never mind the Mad Cow Disease), the crowds in the malls (or the snatchers), or the secret little happy place inside your head (or padded walls, for that matter). You may or may not already have a place in mind, but the whole point is—freedom. For a short couple of months you could purge yourself of all the formulas, problems and cups of coffee that have clogged your brain.

And who to bring? Family's okay, it's great for bonding. Friends are great, too. You never get to spend enough time together. *But*, we all can't help but hope. What if it was your crush? The guy or girl of your dreams? The love of your life? Jennifer Lopez in a bikini? Then imagine what

YOUR/ p.E2

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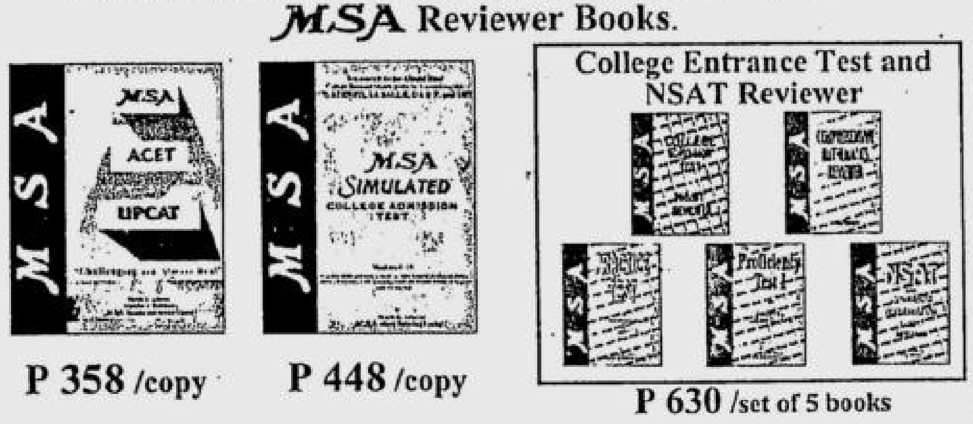

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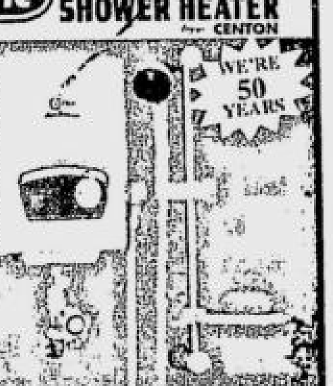

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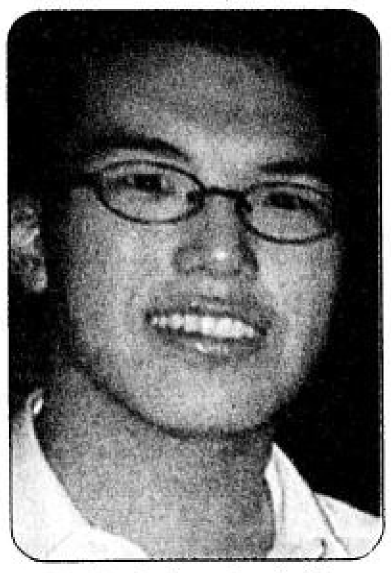
Your dream destination

(From page E1)

you'd *do*. Oh, what images come to mind... but I can only talk about those in smaller newspapers.

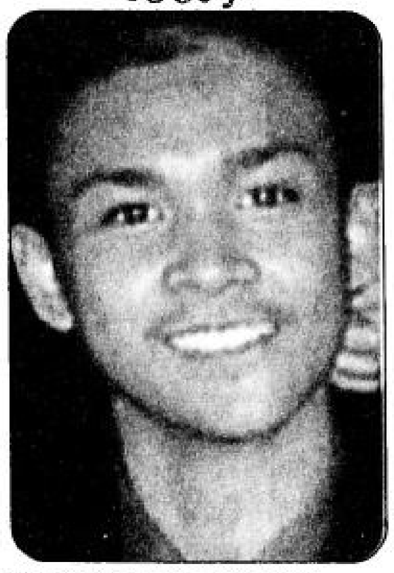
Summer's looking to be a real scorcher this year, but that will hardly matter if you're with people you like. Whether those people are in your dreams or in reality is entirely up to you. When it's time for fun, the sky's the limit. And it seems like some people want to go way beyond that as well. What's *your* dream destination?

EGYPT, because of the pyramids.—**Charlie, 16**



IBIZA! He, he, he—**Santi, 16**

EUROPE, France, Scotland—all those great countries.—**Cathy Young, 17**



TORONTO *para makaranas naman ako ng malamig na* climate *tsaka* snow. And *makita ko si* Vince Carter live.—**Arlo Vicencio, 16, Ateneo**

A place where everything is far beyond earthly things, where drops of sad tears cannot be seen, poverty does not exist and a bright day shines to fill one's life with glee. A place where land is fertile to feed the needs of many, where crystal water flows and gives sustaining resources that will never be depleted. To share it with the needy and poor, not to be corny, but because they deserve all the prizes one can get from the hard burdens of life.—**ASCII, 18**

I would definitely go to Italy. It has always been my dream. I think it's very homey, with the meadows and mountains, not to mention the antique setting. Plus, the food! I'm such a sucker for pasta, and I'll probably bloat myself just eating all the Italian food I could get my hands on. I guess I'm most likely to bring my family along for a nice, once-in-a-lifetime vacation. Besides, it would be too early for me to plan for honeymoon escapades anyway.—**Mica**

What I want to do is explore a woman's mind with my best buddy. With this, we may be the first ones to bridge the gap between the male and female species.—**Yves Aquino**

Wherelse? Not the bar. Better than that. I'd like to be in Ibiza. Oh, yes! Rave parties galore! What am I gonna do there? Everything! Well, ideally, my friends would be the best company to be with, but I would prefer to go alone and meet other partycats. Meow!—**Valerie, 20**

In Tahiti with DJ Zach of NU107! A nice, quiet place and a cool dude. What a perfect combination. Just want to stare at Zach all day long. Oh, and listen to his farts and burps, too. *Oks ba*, Joey? (Don't worry, I'm going to borrow him for one week only. In the meantime, find a replacement immediately. Hmmm. How about Mondo?)—**Alora Mae Uy, 22**

Mambuarao, a beach in the Visayas. I'd want to be with my "SO" (special other) Joey. We'd lounge about and just be with each other.—**Abby**

I'd like to propagate the species in a planet far away with Ben Affleck.—**Jet**

I'd like to go to Europe to go sight-seeing with my girlfriend Elaine.—**Ed**

I'll samba in Rio de Janeiro with Elizabeth Hurley or Donita Rose.—**Ryan**

New York! I love the busy atmosphere and people there don't care about who you are. Then you can give me a million dollars and I'll do some serious shopping there!—**Maui, 17**

Palawan would be the place for me—or any underpopulated island or beach with a romantic atmosphere and modern convenience, with my boyfriend, of course. We can go exploring.—**Jojie**

I have always dreamed of migrating to any part of Europe, say Italy or the Netherlands, and work as a computer engineer and own a restaurant. I'd like to be with my family and Natalie. I also want to go to Australia to watch a performance at the Sydney Opera House with my best friends Tricia and Ryan.—**Jack, 20**

My dream is to go with my husband and child to Paris or to the Caribbean. I'd want a really big house with a gallery inside.—**Drew, 24**

I want to go to Boracay with this chick I met last week. We'll swim and stroll all day with lots of … in the evening.—**Ge**

My dream destination would have to be Paris, France. I would so love to go there, do a lot of shopping with my bud Andrea (who's also a shopping fanatic) at Colette's, Chloe, Dior, Givenchy, Louis Vuitton, Versace, Gucci and Prada. We would attend those crazy fashion shows during fashion week, especially the Dior and Givenchy ones, they're majorly awesome. We'd spot all the French cuties there while sipping coffee at a tres chic boulangerie. Yeah, that pretty much sums up my dream vacation.—**Veej**

I want to go to New York with my baby Eboy. We'll get an apartment. He can play in jazz clubs there while I write my first book. Of course, during off-hours, we'll do nothing but cuddle and make each other happy.—**Angel, 20**

I would like to bring Freddie Prinze Jr. to an island where we could enjoy nature and do sweet and exciting things together.—**Gayle, 20**

I'd like to go to Cancun, Mexico with my fiancée for our honeymoon.—**Jude Turcuato**

I'd want to go back to Las Vegas and watch the dancing fountain at Bellagio Hotel. Super cheap thrill *lang siya* but so far, it's my most favorite spot in the whole world. I also want to go backpacking with my beloved boyfriend around Europe, especially in Spain and Greece. My boyfriend promised me that we would ride the gondola in Venice. So I hope he fulfills that promise.—**Jules, 26**

England! I want to be with Kenneth, my boyfriend. I just want to spend time with him there—seeing the castles and landscape.—**Grace**

I would like to go all over the USA and meet with friends there. But I'd love to get stuck with Marky Mark or Tom de Longe of Blink 182. Oh, baby!—**Cher**

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Another British invasion

BY MAUI V. REYES
2bU! Correspondent

THE A1 I was familiar with was the steak sauce. Apart from that, I thought it was a driving school. Who knew that it's also the highest grade a student can get in the UK, as well as the name of one of the hottest boy bands churning out hits around the world? You may have been deprived of your right to watch television if you haven't seen their very disturbing video for their A-ha rendition of "Take on Me." (Yes, the one depicting a computer game where they're singing while killing the Love Bug virus. Hey, don't look at me.).

Formed after auditions (and three years), the four British guys, namely, Ben, Mark, Paul and Christian released singles before slamming into a first full-on studio album. "Here we Come," which spawned the hit "Like a Rose" and other singles such as "Everytime" and "Heaven by Your Side." It took an A-ha cover to catch everyone's attention. "Take on Me" belongs in the band's second album, "The A List."

"The A List" pretty much has an outstanding resumé for a boy band's second album ('N Sync excluded). Eric Foster-White, who wrote Britney Spears' hit "From the Bottom of my Broken Heart," worked with these guys, as well as Rip Rock and Alex, who penned some songs on 'N Sync's phenomenal "No Strings Attached" and Andreas Carlson and Chris Porter, whose credits include working with George Michael. Not only that—the guys themselves wrote 10 of the 12 songs on their album, and even played their own instruments in some cuts.

While in Manila for a recent promo tour of their new album (hoping to achieve the same double platinum status of their first), 2bU! got Mark and Christian to dish about Marilyn Manson, religion, traveling and possible covers in the future.

MARK

BEN

PAUL

CHRISTIAN

You get this a lot: Where did the name A1 come from?

Mark: Actually it's a pretty cool name. Well, you know, maybe U2 got a lot of funny questions, too [about their band name]. (Laughs) But basically what it means for us is bringing out the best in us, since A1 is the best and highest grade you can get in school in the UK. You know people usually associate themselves with that, like, A1 is the best grade. We're not saying we're the best, but you have to try and be the best we can be.

You're one of those boy bands who actually write their own material. What else sets you apart from other boy bands?

Christian: I think we're a very self-contained band in many ways, not only with the writing, but when it comes to production, we arrange the vocal harmonies ourselves. We choose what songs go on the album, we do our own choreography, we have our own ideas for the videos. Our clothing... actually no, we just wear whatever we buy. So basically everything that comes from A1 is from our hearts. But of course we also accepts ideas and other things from people who know more in different fields. But at the end of the day it's our project, it's our music.

Mark: With relation to the album we actually play our own instruments on some tracks, and I don't think many other bands do that... well, obviously rock bands do that, but not many pop bands do.

After covering "Take on Me," do you have any other plans to cover more songs?

Christian: We were gonna choose a song to cover when we were doing the second album, and you always get attention because people know the song already and it gets played on the radio. Even though we write majority of our songs, we wanted to record one song that was a classic. So we recorded a few of them but we can't really mention them because when we do, someone else is gonna go and record it. But we don't know if we're going to record another cover, it depends. [But "Take On Me"] was a good track for us to do because we all wanted to record it, and it's a good song that I think people wanted to hear again. And it's been a massive hit for us all over the world. Any cover songs you got in mind? (Turns to Mark)

Mark: I got one in mind but I can't say. People are going to go and do it. There's one song I desperately want us to cover, and I think if we do it it's going to be a surprise. I don't like doing such obvious covers; I like doing covers that are a little bit more obscure.

A rock song?

Mark: It's from a rock band... a rock pop band that was pretty famous in the '80s.

Er... Boy George?

Mark: (Starts singing) "Do you really want to..." Actually, yeah, that one, and we're going to do a dance mix version.

Which boy band would you want to collaborate with?

Christian: No. I wouldn't want to. There would be too many people onstage.

Mark: Too many clean-shaven people and too much hair mousse and hair gel... too many black clothes.

Christian: Well, you know, maybe if it were Destiny's Child, we would do it.

Mark: Well, because it doesn't mean just because we're in a pop group we like pop music.

So which rock band would you collaborate with?

Christian: We saw 'N Sync collaborate with Aerosmith and I'm a big Aerosmith fan, so I was a bit jealous. But we all have different personal favorites. I would love to collaborate with Bruce Springsteen.

Mark: I would do any kind of collaboration with Paul McCartney or Elton John.

Eminem?

Christian: Um, I don't think he'd *like* to collaborate with us.

Mark: I actually like some of his songs.

Christian: We met him briefly in an airport in Sweden and he was pretty cool and nice. So why not?

Okay, so which artist would you *not* want to collaborate with?

Mark: Well... Elvis has been dead for some time now... that would be scary.

Christian: Marilyn Manson. Well I'm a Christian... for me the certain views that Marilyn Manson portrays in his act is something that I completely oppose. But for an artist I believe he's a very clever man and he's probably written some good music that some people relate to, but for me, I wouldn't like to.

Mark: Paul would love to, though. I'm also a Christian, so even though it's just an act, like Eminem, still, it's what he portrays in public and influences people. Young kids will sing Eminem tracks and Marilyn Manson tracks and I don't think that's really right. It would scare the hell out of me. Actually he scared the hell out of me: We met him, him and his whole band. He's a nice guy and he's really polite during interviews, but when they walk out... I mean, I opened the door and he was walking out and I was face to face with him, and he was just scary!

Did he have makeup on?

Mark: Yeah. And we have the same makeup artist.

Christian: But the thing is, okay here's one little story. There were two little kids who wanted our autographs and they said, "Oh, we just met Marilyn Manson, and I go, Oh really, what did he say? and they said, We were a bit scared" because he came up to them and he was eating nuts, right? And he said, "Little kids can choke on nuts and die. You want nuts?" I'm in a position where we are very fortunate in society and, whether we like it or not, young people are going to look up to us as role models and idols, and I want to take that responsibility seriously, and I try my best. But I'm not perfect.

Mark: But then, see, we have some A1 fans who are Marilyn Manson fans. It's so weird—we meet fans who are wearing Marilyn Manson T-shirts!

I don't think you can really open for Marilyn Manson...

Mark: Maybe he could open for us.

Christian: But then we'd lose half the audience.

What's in your CD players right now?

Christian: Actually my cousin, Edward John, is releasing a new album, it's his first worldwide release. It's going to be released later this year, so look out for him.

Mark: Toni Braxton's last album. I like "Spanish Guitar." But it's not my ultimate favorite kind of music, but it just happens to be in my CD player.

So you're saying you're Christian. Does that have any effect on your songwriting?

Christian: Well, no. You see, the two other guys aren't Christians, I think. It was just something I said because of that Marilyn Manson thing. It's just our personal views, we're not here to preach to anyone.

Mark: Yeah, when we write songs, sometimes we put in some little emotions we're going through, but we're not trying to tell anybody to do anything. We're not telling anybody how to live with our music.

Best place you've been to so far?

Christian: You can't really compare places, because every place is entirely different. And you know, there's no place like home. So for me, one thing I've learned since going around the world with the band is that it doesn't matter where you are in the world just as long as you're surrounded by people you love and those who love you. And that's so important. But then again we love traveling. Like, we were in 63 Japanese cities last year and we learned a whole new culture through that. We've been to more than 30 countries last year, and everywhere is a new experience and something you can learn from. You always grow as a person when you see different cultures and you try to sort of make it part of yourself.

Mark: My favorite places are L.A. and New York.

Any travel stories? Or you can't dish out any of those either?

Mark: We don't really have much... We can't really put into words life on the road. We do things that are completely insane. And we do crazy things, like, you know, how bands do a cappella when they go on TV shows? (Gets hyper) And it's just (Snores), and okay, what we do is like, a bagpipe a cappella just for a joke. Instead of going all "ooooh," we go (Does a trumpet noise).

Travel must-haves.

Christian: You want to play music a lot, bring a CD player, a DVD player.

Mark: PlayStation, I play that a lot. Toiletry bag. Fresh underwear.

Christian: And a phone. You always want to call home.

Mark: Oh yeah, but not for me since my phone's busted and I won't be using my phone for this entire trip!

Christian: And... my bible.

A1's "The A-List" is out under Sony Music

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PHOTOS BY TIM YAP

Milkwear's travel musts

"PREPARE to board, the show is starting in five minutes," it was announced as a crowd gathered outside the new Milkwear store located at the Power Plant Mall in Rockwell.

Aptly transformed into an airport, the outside section of the store had a landing runway surrounded by a buffet table and a bar. Flight attendants ushered the guests to their places. The store window housed the new singing group Upper Suite which churned out smooth R&B songs while the crowd sipped wine and swayed to the beat.

Then the show began. One by one, the models submitted their boarding passes and went straight to the audience. A parade of luggage-toting mannequins walked through in their Milkwear best.

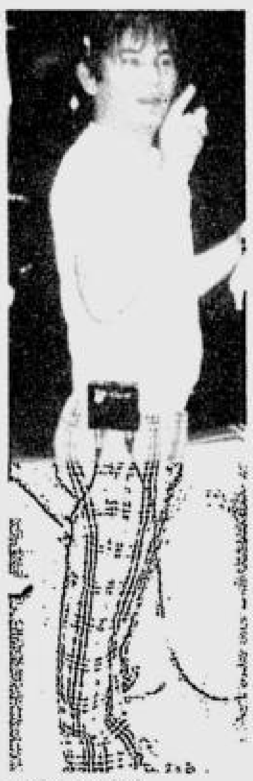
Being part of the show, I observed that Milkwear has indeed evolved. It started out in a converted gallery along Palma, now it is housed in a mall. "Sellout" is what other people might say, especially after the store revamped its corporate setup. Not so. Unlike the first shop, which relied solely on consignments, the new store's merchandise is the result of well thought-out collections conceptualized by the resident design team.

Travel style

Find travel-worthy pieces such as trench coats, checkered denim jackets and jeans, polkadot corduroy and more. Not only that. In this Rockwell store, Milkwear has added a home section, with incense, candles, plates, even walking canes available. All this in line with their "Culture in Motion" motto.

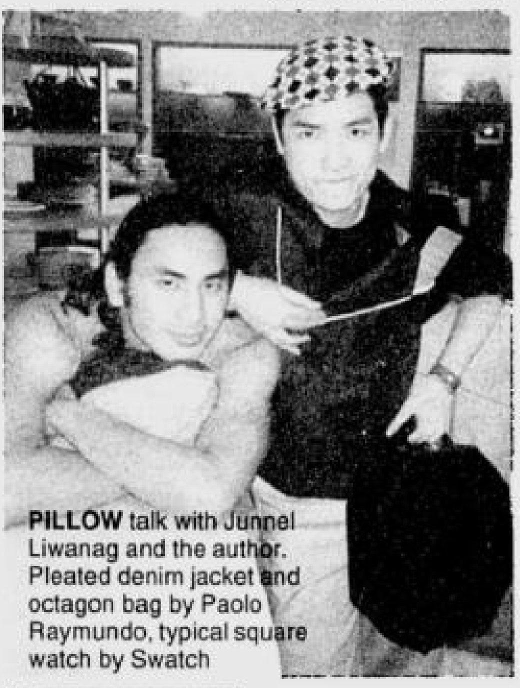
Six young designers are behind this store, taken from the original Milkwear pool. Paolo Raymundo, Kenneth Chua, Leah Castañeda, Roman Roxas and Stephaney Sarmiento are among today's brightest style-setters, along with the accessory statements of Carmel Bacus and graphic visions of Ge Madriaga. Boom Dayupay is also a featured designer, with a line he designs with sister Lani called "Halo."

So, are you ready to board? Witness on this page the scene's globetrotters. *Tim Yap*



"BOARDING PASSES, PLEASE..." says director Robby Carmona

DOCUMENTS COM-PLEATED. Rina Raymundo embodies fresh funk



PILLOW talk with Junnel Liwanag and the author. Pleated denim jacket and octagon bag by Paolo Raymundo, typical square watch by Swatch

MILKWEAR'S united colors of Bidemi, Katie and Sabrina embody "culture in motion"

MALE BONDING. Albert Adrales and Glenn Enriquez on backstage before the show

PURPLE and denim pleasure on Jo Neil Benitez and Razel Andersen

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ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

He wishes a change of nationality so he can date a Chinese girl

Carlos Garchitorena & September Mahino

DEAR September and Carlos,

I met this girl a month ago. Let's call her Chinagirl. At first, I wasn't that attracted to her but as days passed by, I found myself falling for her charms. We're from different schools and we met during one major production for our schools. Our respective organizations collaborated to help the production heads of the said event. We're not close and she barely noticed me.

After the production, I finally had the guts to talk to her and ask her out on Valentine's Day. She said she's waiting for someone else to ask her out. I was persistent. I kept on texting her that I would be glad to take her out if her "someone special" didn't invite her. I told her, "If you don't like me just let me know. I would really appreciate that."

Then I finally found out the reason she didn't want to go out with me. Her family is conservative Chinese who only entertains suitors of their own kind. What will I do? I really like her and I can't stop thinking about her. I'm exhausting all efforts just to get a date. I'm even planning to ask permission from her parents but that will be too much.

I wish I am Chinese, too. I can't understand their tradition. And I can't believe that in this day and age, intraracial marriages are still prevalent (and all I'm asking is a date). Is it for security reasons or keeping the tradition alive? Please enlighten me.

BEANS

I really admire your persistence. Most guys, or girls for that matter, won't try their luck after the first brush-off. So here's to your guts!

Sadly, I can't think of anything you can do just so you can date Chinagirl. She's will not go out with you because her family is conservative, and she probably never will unless she starts liking you and gets rebellious enough to go against her family's tradition. It seems that the non-love affair you've got going on involves just you and her family. She's passive and just in the background; probably because she doesn't care? You're facing a dead end here.

I'm hoping that she will like you one of these days. Just continue being charming and nice and stop bugging her for a date. She'll come to her senses when she does. If you don't think being charming is enough, try wishing on a star. It hasn't done me any good yet, but at least it keeps me hoping while I still can't do anything. Good luck.

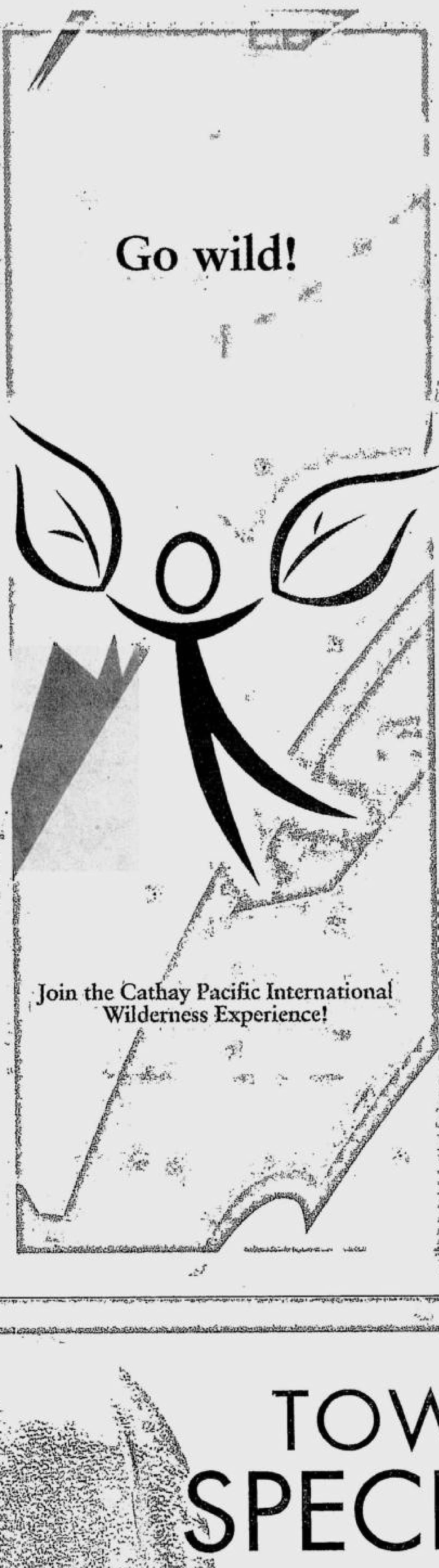
SEP

Beans, being Chinese should be the least of your desires. Imagine the problems that you might inherit along with a new citizenship and the girl of your monthly tastes. Learn to love your own nationality, Beans. In fact, what would probably be more appropriate would be to impress upon Chinagirl and her parents that they are now residents of the Philippines and are required to be assimilated into society through a blood pact or the sacrifice of their daughter to the State or its interested representative (you). After all, what better future could you promise them than the right to ignore public law, scoff at government policy and give bus drivers the dirty finger?

Oh, no, Beans. You have so much more to offer than. Her parents have more to gain marrying off their beautiful prize to a true-blooded Filipino (a.k.a. *askal*) who has developed an immunity to kidnapping and illnesses caused by consumption of fish ball. This you must impress upon her parents, Beans. We live in the Philippines where, for better or for worse, anything goes. Assert your rights, dammit!

CALOY

E-mail Sep and Caloy at lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph or write to PDI Lifestyle, Chino Roces corner Yague and Mascardo, Makati City


Go wild!

Join the Cathay Pacific International Wilderness Experience!

Saving the environment requires years of hard work and everyone's help – but it can start with you and nine days in South Africa. If you are a 16-18 year old Filipino student who wants to do your part in helping Mother Earth, you'll want to be part of the Cathay Pacific International Wilderness Experience. If chosen, you'll go on an **all-expense paid trip to Johannesburg, South Africa from July 16-25, 2001!** The 9-day program will expose you to the beauty of the African wilderness and teach you about man's impact on ecology. You'll also get to act as an "ambassador" for the Philippines and make friends with young people from other countries and cultures very different from your own.

Can't wait to join? Then write a 200-word English essay on an environmental topic that interests you, giving your personal opinion on the issue and possible solutions to the problem. Send it with the completed application form below, a detailed resumé and a copy of your valid passport **on or before May 4, 2001.** You could soon be on your way to the wilderness of South Africa and helping the planet!

Fly Cathay Pacific. The Heart of Asia.

APPLICATION FORM
CATHAY PACIFIC

ATTACH PHOTO

Date ______________________

I hereby apply for participation for my child in the Cathay Pacific International Wilderness Experience from July 16-25, 2001

SIGNED ______________________
(parent / guardian)

CHILD'S NAME ______________________

SCHOOL ______________________

DATE OF BIRTH ______________________

MAILING ADDRESS ______________________

____

ZIP CODE ________ TELEPHONE ______________________
(office)

E-MAIL ADDRESS ______________________

POST YOUR APPLICATION FORM TO:

Marketing Department
CATHAY PACIFIC AIRWAYS
Manila: 25/F Trafalgar Plaza Building
105 Dela Costa Street Salcedo Village,
Makati City, Philippines
Cebu: Garden Level Door #8, Rivergate Mall
Gen. Maxilom Ave.,
Cebu City, Philippines

PLEASE POST THIS APPLICATION FORM, TOGETHER WITH YOUR CHILD'S TWO-PAGE ENVIRONMENTAL ESSAY, TO THE ADDRESS ABOVE. FOR MORE DETAILS, LOG ON TO www.cathayflytoafrica.iskul.org

N.B. Only applications which are accompanied by a two-page essay on the environmental topic of your child's choice, written in English, will be considered.

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Take your pick from a wide selection of bath linen

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14.75

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29.75

Bath Towel
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139.75

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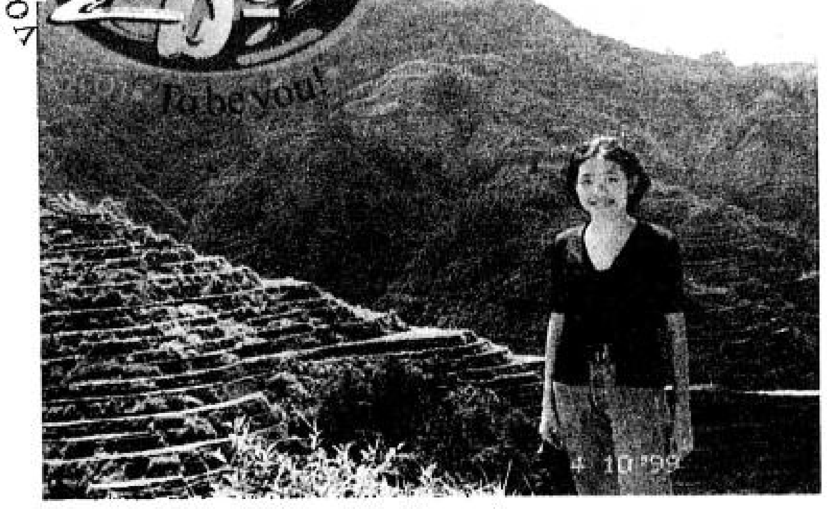
BACKPACKING cutie in Puerto Galera

Your dream destination is right at your doorstep



A PAUSE, a pose by the world's 8th wonder

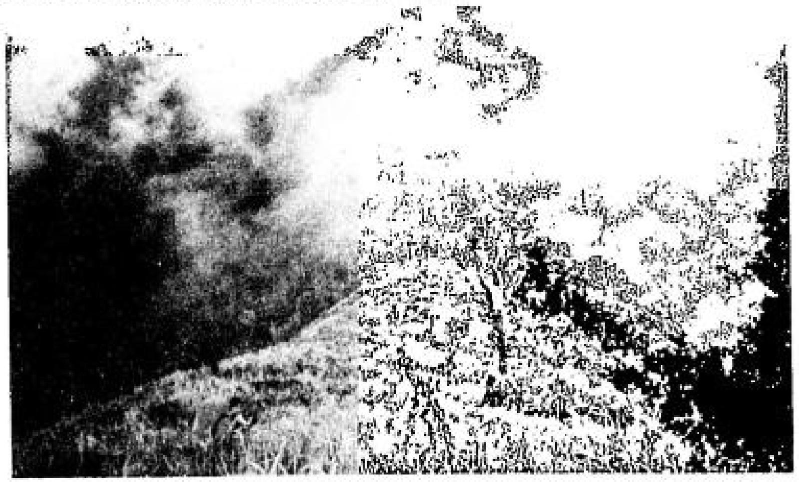
Adventure begins at home

FOR THE LONGEST time, you've been dreaming of boarding that plane to go to Hawaii where you could bask in the sun on the beach and show off your new bikini. Or maybe to Hong Kong where you can savor their fantastic Peking duck. Or Paris where you can blow all your cash. Or California where you can ogle at the hard-bodied surfers.

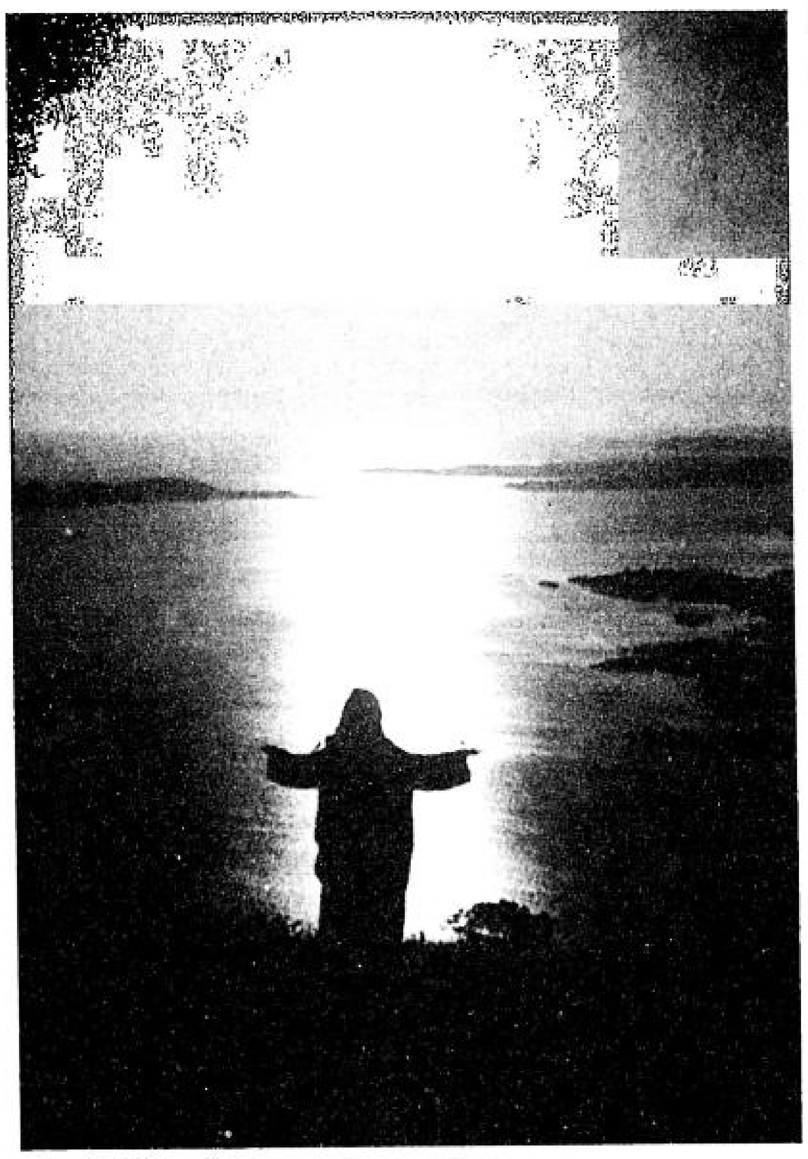
But have you actually been around the Philippines? Have you built sand castles on the beaches of Batangas? Have you reached the top of Mt. Pulog? Have you even seen the Banawe Rice Terraces?

Take a look at the photos below. You may just think twice about leaving the country. You might find your dream vacation right here at home.

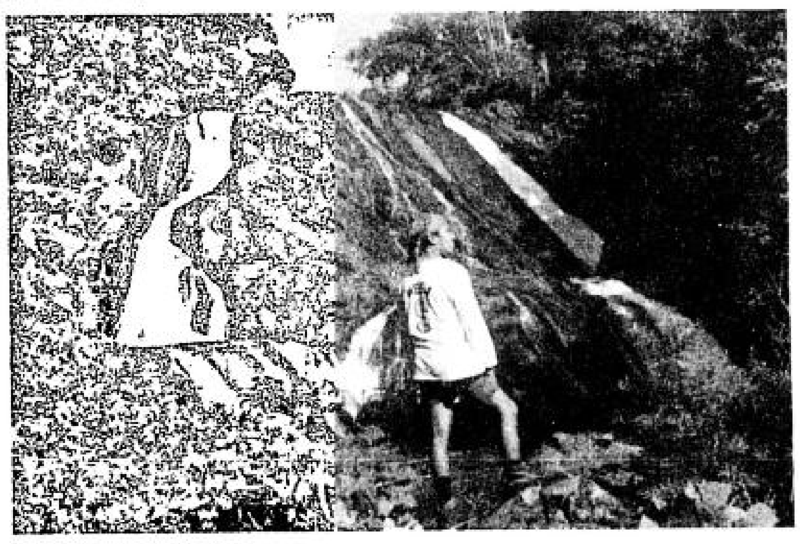
2bU! readers sent in these photos of their favorite places in the Philippines before the turn of the millennium. 2bU! would like to give tokens to the owners of these photos. Please contact Pam at ls_2bU@inquirer.com.ph.

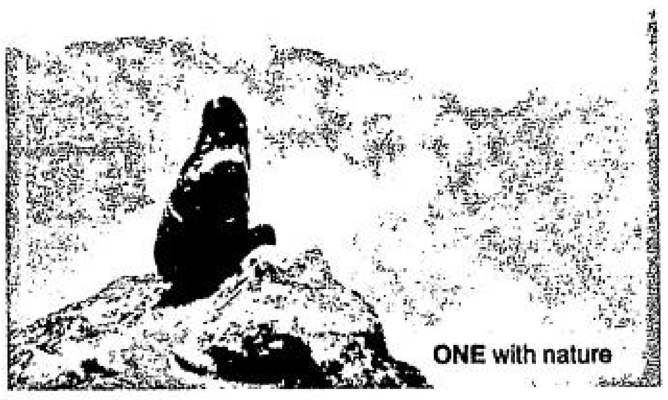

MAJESTIC MOUNTAIN. Mt. Kalatungan ranges

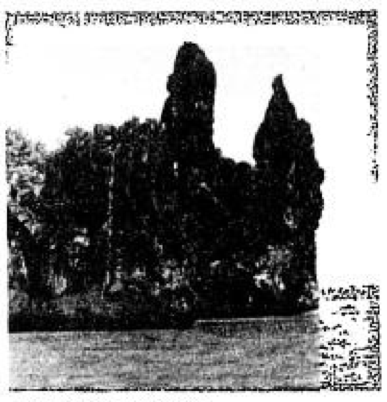
AT PEACE with the clouds

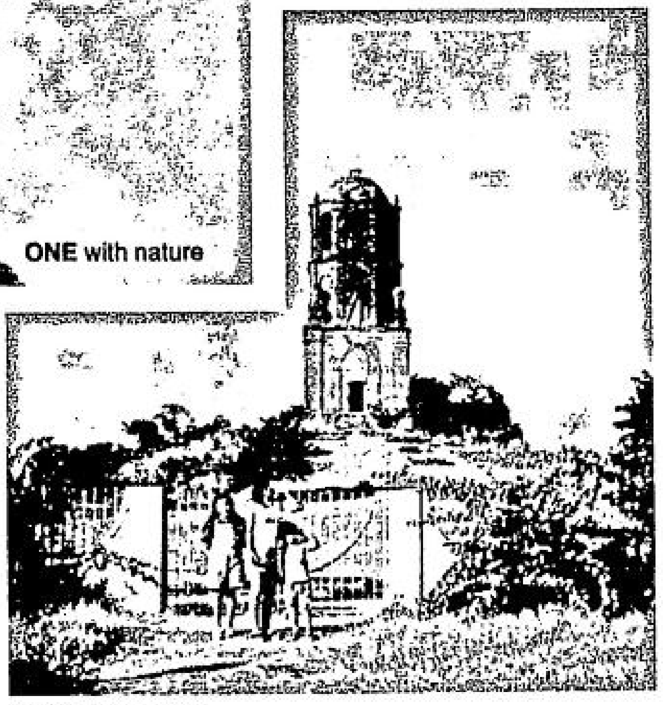

SPIRITUAL

HANGING out on top of Mt. Pulog, Benguet— the second highest peak in the country.


AWESTRUCK


ONE with nature


BREATHTAKING


NOT just beaches

STROLLING along the cobbled streets of old Vigan, Ilocos Sur

WHO needs California?

FREEDOM

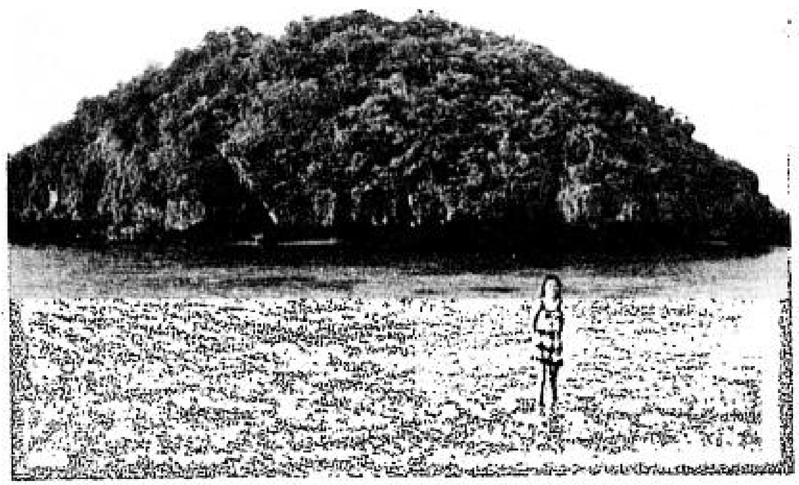
POSTCARD PERFECT. Almost brings tears to your eyes.

WATER WONDER

FAMILY fun at White Island in Camiguin

SERENITY

GIRL power in Iba, Zambales


LOOKING FOR 'THE BEACH.' Hundred Islands in Alaminos, Pangasinan

Spice up your life in incredible India

TEXT AND PHOTOS
BY MA. LALAINE B. REYES
2bU! Correspondent

CUTE smiles from the Taj Exotica Hotel kids

THE MAJESTIC Taj Mahal Hotel

I'VE always been fascinated by Indian shows on cable. With their shiny and elaborate national costumes plus the energetic duck-like movements of their necks and tush while wandering at the side of the mountains. They're also known for producing beauty queens —from former Miss Universe Sushmita Sen to the current Miss World. Traveling to this culturally rich and diverse country proved to be one enjoyable ride.

My friends warned me to have shots taken due to the regular outbreak of dengue fever there. I was scared of needles so I just took anti-pills, packed mosquito-repellent lotion, bottled water and my trusty cam. All set!

Arriving late in the afternoon in Mumbai after an eight-hour airplane trip, hordes of small, old black Fiat taxis greeted me at the airport. Strangely, their meters were placed outside, near the front mirrors. I spotted my colleagues from Indonesia—Inge, Anto and Daniel—and jubilantly joined them on the way to The Leela Hotel.

After marveling at the hotels big chandeliers and gargantuan marble fountains, we rented a taxi for 1,200 rupees to get to the heart of Mumbai for some sightseeing and shopping. We felt like sardines inside the small taxi. Their drivers would put to shame our drivers in the Philippines. I almost got a heart attack, expecting to collide with other cars whenever our driver squeezed in to get ahead.

Children wearing beads around their necks and colorful artworks on their faces approached our taxi, begging for money. How's that for colorful encounters? There were lots of Indians living in the slums near the road and bridges, the women sporting still their traditional attires even in their meager conditions. The driver got pissed because we didn't fancy the place he brought us to. How's that for Indian hospitality?

Sightseeing in Mumbai

Once a tiny island overrun by swaying palm trees, Mumbai used to belong to the native *koli* fisher folk, which still live in their little villages surrounded by soaring skyscrapers. In the 17th century came Portuguese colonists who dotted the island with several forts, which stand even today. In 1661, Mumbai was finally ceded to Charles II of England and eventually became one of the largest ports in the British Empire.

The downtown area now is still exactly as it was, full of graceful old colonial buildings that have obviously seen better days. We passed by Juhu Beach. It's a bourgeois paradise, filled to the gills with screaming children, courting couples and rowdy adolescents. Just like Luneta!

Taraporewala Aquarium on Marine Drive has a good collection of sea and freshwater fish and other marine life. The outside design of blue and white fishes painted on its wall was surely eye-catching. Mahalaxmi Racecourse, with its white fences, reminds me of the Sta. Ana Racetrack. Racing season is between November and February, frequented by India's high society.

What I noticed were the big and fantastically handpainted cinema billboards that dominate many streets. Indians love the cinema. The Indian film industry, centered in Bombay, is one of the largest and most glamorous in the world. Mockingly called Bollywood by locals and cynics, it churns out over 900 films every year. The vast proportion of films produced is gaudy melodramas based on three vital ingredients: romance, violence and music. It is cheap operatic escapism and extremely harsh on the ears. Reminded me of home!

We arrived at leafy Laburnum Road, a quiet lane (with rows of mini-houses) named after its shady trees, Mani Bhavan, to check out Gandhi's old residence. A pretty two-storied structure, it houses a reference library with over 2,000 books, photos and a diorama depicting the great leaders life. (Remember our grade-school field trips in Ayala Museum?) Tour guide Ashokum Kumar shared that the small wooden figurines were done for free by volunteers. They would get sandalwood from the jungle and carve patiently for three hours. Visitors were mainly Italians, Americans, Germans and Japanese. Many old Gandhians still visit the place to pay homage to their hero.

We headed next to The Gateway of India, Mumbai's most famous monument. According to my Indian friend, Snehalata, this was built to commemorate the visit of King George V and Queen Mary in 1911, complete with four turrets and intricate latticework carved into the yellow basalt stone. Today this symbol of colonialism has gotten Indian-ized, drawing droves of locals and eager tourists (like me!) for some photo opportunities. Hawkers dressed in white long garments placed a *bindi*, like a red dot, on Anto's forehead and handed him flower petals. He accepted it thinking it was free, but had to pay 10 rupees.

Walking distance is the Taj Mahal Hotel. The architect, a Briton named Chambers, designed the hotel with its back to the Arabian Sea, a mistake that has never been rectified. Even today, the grand old lobby faces the road behind. It hardly matters, though, because the Taj is really a work of art, with its elaborate structure, charming cupolas and oriental décor. Having had enough for the day, we headed back to the hotel. Tired but excited for our trip to Goa the following day.

Plane trip to Goa

I busied myself by scrutinizing the stewardesses, dressed in their national costume. They served us spicy potato patties and *bhature-chole* or beans. Yummy!

Goa is a tiny emerald land on the West Coast of India. On the way to the hotel, we marveled at the picturesque rural scenery. The general way of living is markedly different, the people quiet and peaceful. We passed by old Catholic churches built by British inhabitants, soccer fields, kids dressed in white shirts playing innocently beside the road.

Arriving at the Taj Exotica Hotel, I marveled at its impeccably appointed space. It's an inspired oasis of luxury and tranquility. The towering palms surrounding the hotel welcomed the sea breeze with passive nods. Inge and I took pictures of each other at the hotel's colorful interiors. We walked leisurely near the Arabian Sea fronting the hotel (visions of sea pirates with a parrot perched on its captain's shoulders advancing toward us filled my imagination). Swimming was prohibited due to the big waves so I just walked barefoot and pinched myself, not believing I am millions of miles away from home. After settling down in our room, watching Indian shows while eating spicy *samosas*, we retired for the night for our next day's trip to Panaji.

Bus ride to Panaji

We boarded an old rickety bus on our way to the state's slightly sleepy capital, an hour's drive from Goa. We marveled at the sights as we viewed old structures of houses, with red-tiled roofs. We were traveling for more than two freaking hours, wondering on where the driver was taking us. Turns out that the driver thought we wanted to savor the sights that he took us to the long route, even though our windows were already clouded from the incessant rain. All we wanted was to shop for peanuts and Indian trinkets. We finally arrived but only had 30 minutes to go around.

My Singaporean friend, Belinda, scampered to the Benetton store and bought some because it's much cheaper than buying back home. I was like, wow, we've traveled long miles just to buy Benetton in India.

I left our group and scoured for stores that were selling pashmina and cashmere shawls. I passed by small stores selling nuts for 150 rupees. The stores were similar to that in Ongpin—small, dingy and crowded. I went inside one that sells authentic Indian threads. A lush red and yellow artfully decorated *sarong* caught my eye. But 950 rupees was too steep for me. I searched and landed in an obscure store selling silver accessories. Inge bought two silver anklets for 150 rupees while I checked a pendant with a picture of an Indian governor. I walked back to the bus while savoring the sights of Panaji as the rain drizzled on my weary face. Majority of the Indian women still wore their saris. Most of the people rode on their motorcycles and bicycles. The place, with its touch of nostalgia, provided a soothing effect on my frazzled nerves.

Back at the hotel, I had my first real aromatherapy massage for 1,000 rupees. It was worth it as Nutan, a 21-year-old masseuse at the fitness center, lulled me to sleep with her mixture of olive pomace oil, rosemary, jasmine and double-filtered KLF coconut oil. Good for the skin and stupendously relaxing as I hummed to the soothing jazz music playing. I even forgot to feel conscious when she asked me earlier to strip naked.

The following night, we headed off to Martin's Corner Restaurant, a 15-minute bus ride from the hotel. We ate spicy shrimp and chicken to our hearts' content. My nose and cheeks were all red but who cares? After that, it was Indian dancing all night long. My Indian friend, Seta, felt bad because we haven't really experienced India—the lavish festivals—or experienced actual marriages where everyone is welcomed to attend—due to limited time. Nevertheless, we contended ourselves with lively Indian dancing and eating.

More shopping in Mumbai

Back in Mumbai, we headed to the only Catholic church in Bandra, St. Andrew's Church. Fronting the Indian Sea, it is situated in a predominantly Catholic area. We lighted some candles and I thanked God for my good opportunity to visit India.

Afterward, it's last-minute shopping for us at Bandra. It's a crazy place, where stalls are placed beside the road while cars and motorcycles zoom past you at a frenzied rate.

We headed to a store selling pashminas in pastel colors with tasseled ends. Prices started at 1,000 rupees. Cashmere in dark colors with hand sewn flower and ethnic designs was sold for 300. My friends were frantically buying while I searched for that one design that would rock my world. No such luck.

Seta haggled for the slippers I was eyeing, displayed near the road. It's 250 rupee each but eventually the hawker agreed on 150.

"Madam, you might be interested to buy this, too." He was showing me slippers with red tassels at its pointed ends. Ali Baba and his 40 thieves might be more interested to buy these, I thought.

We headed back to the car but crossing the street proved to be one crazy act as cars zoomed from all directions. It's each one protecting one's life as we crossed the street. It's off to the airport for us.

Loving India

Mumbai and Goa are safe and charismatic destinations that fully reward exploration. Despite the British influence, religion still seeps in every facet of the Indian life, which define the nation's identity. Wouldn't it be cool if we still wore our *baro't saya* every day? Alanis Morissette once claimed that her visit to India had the most profound impact on her. She even wrote a song, "Baba."

Although I didn't make any spiritual transformation, I feel blessed and enriched in experiencing Indian culture, even just for five days. On my next visit, I'll definitely visit the Taj Mahal in Abra and pose just like the late Princess Diana near the pond. But for now, any tips in curing a red, puffy nose from too much eating of spicy food?

DO YOU TURN YOUR HEAD WHEN SOMEONE SHOUTS

"HEY FATSO!"?

If you think you're overweight, it's not just your ego you should worry about. Medical research has shown the various links between excess weight, and diseases such as hypertension, diabetes, gallstones, gout, sleep apnea, and certain forms of cancer.

Most people don't understand that obesity is in itself a disease that needs to be cured. Medically, obesity is defined as an excess accumulation of body fat sufficient to endanger health. But because people come in all sorts of shapes and sizes, a weighing scale alone is not a good indication of whether you are overweight or not. A tall person can weigh 150 lbs and still be underweight, while a short person who weighs the same can be overweight.

To get an accurate assessment of your condition, you need to compute your Body Mass Index (BMI). Simply divide your weight in kilograms over your height in meter squared, and you will get your BMI. Using Asian standards, if your BMI is over 23, then you are overweight. You should consult your doctor and ask him or her for advice on a long-term weight management program. Do not resort to purchasing over-the-counter drugs. Advice from experts will help you achieve a healthy weight.

Your doctor can also tell you about a proven treatment for obesity that has benefited more than 8.5 million individuals around the world. This drug has been well-researched by a reputable pharmaceutical company and is backed by clinical studies with proven efficacy and safety for 30 years before it was marketed. This new treatment, which is a lipase inhibitor, cuts down the absorption of dietary fat in the body by up to 30%, allowing for radical improvements in weight loss and weight management programs. And unlike food supplements that claim to work but have no scientific basis, this drug was approved by the FDA in the US as well as the European Union, and our local BFAD (Bureau of Food and Drugs).

Weight management counsellors are also available by phone, from 9 am - 6 pm, Monday to Friday, to help you compute your BMI, and to give advice on how you can avail of a long term weight management program. If you're in Metro Manila, call **899-5955** and a counsellor will be on hand to answer your questions. (Outside Metro Manila, please dial **1-800-1-888-5955**).

FREE BMI CALCULATOR. If you would like to check your own Body Mass Index (BMI) fill out this coupon and send it by fax at **890-5012** or mail to Xenical Counselling Center, PO Box 3994, Makati Central Post Office. You can also send an e-mail containing all the information below, and send it to xenical@bcdpinpoint.com . We will send you your own BMI calculator, along with instructions on its use.

☑ **YES,** Please send me my free BMI calculator, along with instructions on how I can accurately measure my Body Mass Index. Please send to the address below:

First Name Last Name
Address
Tel. No. (pls put number where we can reach you during the day)
Mobile phone no
E-mail address
Height Weight
PDI-03-14-2001

How to be your own best pack man

The first hurdle in traveling is packing, an art and a science in itself

By Jules Alcantara

SO you're leaving. You've decided that you simply can't take the heat, not to mention the pollution, traffic and those ubiquitous campaign paraphernalia. You'd rather be somewhere else, preferably far away from the madding crowd.

There is one important thing you must do before you take a trip: pack. Among other things, we are known for being "pack animals." Go to any airport, bus terminal or dockyard. Most often than not, those with several pieces of luggage and huge boxes are Filipinos.

Funny, isn't it? We have even found a creative way to go above and beyond the "only one piece of hand-carry allowed" rule. For crying out loud, our hand-carry can easily pass for luggage that should be checked in. We simply can't do away with the habit of bringing everything short of the refrigerator and the bed during trips.

Well, having brought only a pilot bag to a one-month trip to L.A. qualifies yours truly to give hopefully what could be considered as useful tips. Just don't ask me how many *balikbayan* boxes I had with me when I arrived. You wouldn't want to know, believe me.

Before you even start packing, bear in mind that you have to consider a couple of very important factors.

ILLUSTRATIONS: STEPH BRAVO

Weather and climate

Obviously, bringing a thick winter jacket to the beach or Hawaii implies that you need to spend time working on your IQ points rather than soaking up under the sun. Likewise, if you decide to bring only spaghetti straps and *sando* to your trip to Alaska, then you may as well be ready to dial 911. Pneumonia, my dear, can be quite fatal.

Itinerary

Okay, I used to think that making an itinerary defeats the purpose of going on a vacation. You're leaving because you want to get away from stress and school deadlines, etc. Why should you be enslaved by a schedule, right? You're going on vacation because you want to waste time!

But believe me when I say that you need some sort of guideline or schedule just the same so that your vacation won't go to waste. You don't want to end up telling yourself, "I should have gone to..." I should have bought this..." and "I should have done this...," right?

Length of stay

Don't bring 30 pieces of tops and bottoms if you're only staying for a couple of days. Make sure that you bring enough clothes if you plan to stay for a long time and heavy socializing is part of your itinerary. Besides, if you plan to go shopping, then you're going to need a lot of space in your luggage.

Laundry services

Laundry services are always available anywhere, especially in the US (hold on to your quarters). But they can get quite expensive especially if you are going to stay in a hotel. Hotels usually charge by the piece and laundromats vary in rates. If you think you're going to end up washing your clothes, then make sure you know exactly what to do with them. Check the tags: if it says dry clean, then you do not wash. Leave it to the experts, okay?

So you think you're ready to pack? Remember these.

- **Shoes.** It's highly recommendable to bring a pair of sturdy running shoes or sneakers. You're bound to do a lot of walking and nothing ruins sightseeing than aching feet. A pair of evening shoes (heels or leather shoes) for going to a fancy restaurant (some dining places have stringent rules on footwear) or for some serious partying. Sandals and walking shoes also deserve space in your *maleta*.
- **Jeans.** Bring at least two pairs. The wonderful thing about denim is that you can use them more than once and if you pair it with a glamorous top, then you can easily transform yourself from a traveling plain Jane to a jet-setting VIP.
- **Tops.** Shirts and blouses made of stretchable or knitted material are always a must-have in your luggage. They are low maintenance—they hardly get crumpled, no need to iron, plus you can roll them up in such a way that they won't take too much space in your luggage. They're also very flexible—you can wear them rain or shine or snow.
- **Black.** Bring at least a pair of black formal slacks (for girls, that stretchable black boot-cut pants). You can pair them with either running shoes or formal shoes. Also, you can never go wrong if you bring an all-black-ensemble.
- **Jewelry.** This is actually very tricky. If you're the type who feels naked without jewelry, then go ahead and bring if you must. But do keep it at a minimum. A pair of simple studs or necklace will do. Leave those bangles and bracelets (and your usual dose of metallic flashiness) in the safety of your home. A watch is a must just as long as it is not full of diamond studs. There are snatchers everywhere, not just in the Philippines, so make sure you do not attract the attention of these elements. And word to the wise, wear your jewelry. Don't make it *siksik* in some corner of your hand-carry and luggage or else improve the chances of losing it.
- **Jacket.** A thin cardigan or a denim jacket comes in handy even in hot places like the beach. But for colder destinations, then a thick jacket (preferably with a hood) is a must-have. Colorful jackets are cute and cool, but if you want to be more flexible, then bring a jacket in earth or neutral tones or black.
- **Bags.** Apart from your luggage, it is highly recommended to bring at least one other bag especially for sightseeing, malling or backpacking. Body bags, knapsacks and belt bags were invented not just to make a fashion statement, but most importantly, to make travelling more convenient. Another good option would be to bring a mid-size leather shoulder bag. Leather is sturdy and never goes out of style. You won't be ashamed to bring it both to daytime activities and evening events.
- **Underwear.** How many horror stories have we heard of people of bringing everything but underwear? Remember: forget everything but your passport, wallet and underwear!
- **Socks.** Two is the magic number: two pairs of terrycloth sports socks, two pairs of white ped socks, two pairs of thin black socks (for loafers or leather shoes) and you're all set!
- **Toiletries.** Toothbrush is expensive elsewhere. So are soap, shampoo, lotion and shaver. Do not forget the deodorant! So if you want to maximize your pocket money, then better bring these. Bring a pack of sanitary pads—nothing is worse than a painful surf in the crimson waves than buying pads that are five times more expensive than your local brand. Petroleum jelly always comes in handy for sunburn or flaky dry skin. Just make sure you transfer it to a small container instead of those big bulky square ones. For girls who can't live without makeup, there are only two things you need: Tweezerman (to pluck those annoying growing eyebrow hair and to keep those brows neat) and Benefit Benetint for lips and cheeks. The latter is for blush and lipstick, all in one small bottle.
- **Medicine.** If you're prone to allergies (crustacean-intolerant, etc.) then bring allergy tablets. A change of weather can induce asthma attacks, so bring a nebulizer. Aspirin and cold tablets cost an arm and a leg in most parts of the world so please, please bring your provisions. Getting sick is much more expensive elsewhere. Also, if you're not sure if the water in your destination is safe, then purifying water tablets are an absolute necessity.
- **Lip balm**
- **Camera or videocam.** Preferably with panoramic function.
- **Dictionary.** No, not the Webster' English dictionary. Of course, get one in Spanish or Japanese, depending on where your destination is. Unless you're game for non-stop charades and hand gestures.
- **A bottle of H20.** Travelling can be dehydrating.
- **International driving license.** Apply for one with the LTO at least a month before you plan to leave.
- **Passport, visa and other necessary documents.** No further explanations needed. Bring them with you all the time. You never know when you're going to need it.
- **Money.** Apart from cold cash, international credit cards are a great help, believe me.

WELCOME To ALOHA

Don't forget to keep it light and compact. You don't want to break your back carrying your entire luggage.

Oh yeah, keep a pen and paper handy, according to Tammy. You never know, you might just run into Leonardo or better yet, Jude Law.

E-mail the author at jules26@gurlmail.com

Town Nights Party

The streets will be alive and kicking as your favorite bands give you a night of total entertainment right outside at the Town Plaza. Have a drink and enjoy the cool music of Side A on March 15; South Border on March 22, and Freestyle on March 29. It's definitely a late night affair you wouldn't want to miss.

There's also a sale and cinema promo on the concert dates itself. With all items P300 and below, shop the whole day at the Town Plaza and Cinema Lobby. Or if you're a movie buff, watch a flick in any of our new cinemas with our buy-2-take-1 promo. Get ready for an out of Town experience.

Find some of our coolest selections even outside our stores.

ALABANG TOWN CENTER

Participating Stores: Body Shop, Rockport, Vans, Gift Gate, All Boxed Up, Buffalo, Kashieca, Sari-Sari Store, Studio AK ,Club Spoon, Hero's Pizza Pasta Presto, Fastrax, Cable Car & Tequila Joe's

Per DTI-NCR Permit no. A11-059 Series of 2001